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SAVVY TIMES



Welcome to the Journey! Issue 17, November 2007

Parelli International Club Magazine



Bridle Wisdom

Performance, Naturally

Creative with Cavalettis

Courses: In Colorado and Florida

A person wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and dark trousers is walking from left to right through a red, pleated curtain. The person is partially obscured by the folds of the curtain. The background is dark.

Savvy Club

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STORE FOR YOU

A dark horse is visible through red, vertically pleated curtains. The horse's head and neck are partially visible, looking towards the right. The background is dark, and the curtains are a deep red color.

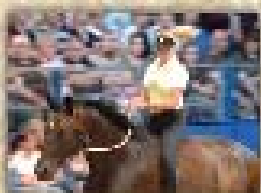
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SAVVY TIMES™

Parelli International Savvy Club™ Magazine
Issue 17, November 2007

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FRONT COVER: Pat with Magic
and Casper during the UK
conference in August



Dear Friends,

It's been an amazing summer, quite different from any we've experienced before mainly because we sent our best horses to England! It was a funny feeling when the day came for them to leave. We loaded them up as usual and it looked every bit as if they were headed for one of our US tour stops, but knowing that they were headed to the airport to get on a plane bound for the UK was quite an odd thought. It was going to be almost two weeks before we would see them again.

Cezanne, who's responsibility it was to get Casper, Magic and Remmer there in good health (no pressure!) was great. She called us from every location... quarantine, the airport, after they were loaded, after they touched down in Scotland, enroute to Stoneleigh Park (where our offices are). Neil Pye sent an email after they arrived saying it was strange to see the tailgate come down late that night and those horses walk off the lorry... in England! Even stranger to be getting the email!

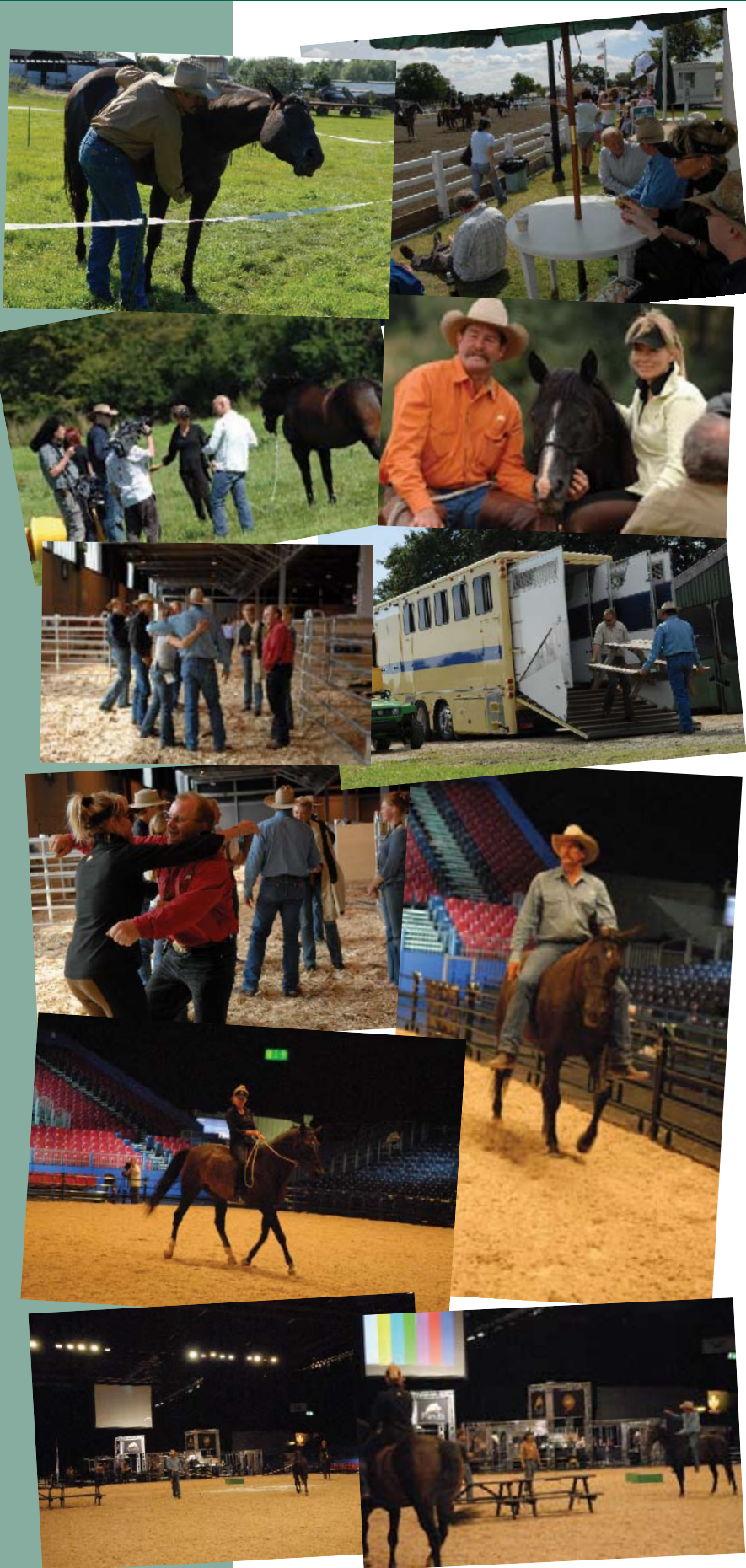
A week later it was our turn to get on the plane, England bound. Internationally speaking, it was our first time to have our own horses for seminars and demos and it was very exciting. All was in place for a huge debut and resurgence, we were flying 40 of our own staff there, had the biggest arena booked (The NEC, National Equestrian Center), a crowd of 4,000 expected, the international launch of our new Success Series... and OUR OWN HORSES!

We stepped off the plane in Luton, drove to Stoneleigh Park, reunited with managers Neil and Sue, and with former Faculty member, Lyla, met the new office staff, toured the building and couldn't wait to go see the horses. We headed to the farthest reaches of the equestrian park, came around the corner and there they were, heads down in the lush grass, swishing flies. They looked just like they did at home! Casper and Remmer were together and Magic was in a separate pen.

I called out to Remmer and he looked up with a surprise, as if to say "what are you doing here?!" He came over to the fence and offered me all his itchy spots to scratch, after which I jumped on and cruised around with him as he went back to grazing. Apart from knowing we were in the UK, everything felt the same.

The next few days were devoted to playing with our horses, getting ready for the show, and doing a bunch of interviews lined up with major publications.





Lots of people ask how we warm up for a show. I think the most important thing to say is that we don't exactly practice. We just work on making little advancements every day and keeping the relationship in balance. Because our horses are such different Horsenalties, my approach with Remmer is different from Pat's with Magic and Casper.

GETTING MAGIC, CASPER AND REMMER SHOW-READY

Magic is more of a RB Introvert*, with some extroverted tendencies so much of what Pat does is centered around developing her confidence so she can gradually take more and more pressure. She has energy galore and needs a lot to do, but at shows she can get really unconfident (that's why she pees a lot!) so Pat is always working on that threshold. Each day Pat played with her on the ground and riding, developing her confidence and sharpening up her skills. Playing with Casper at the same time is really good for Magic as she has a job and feels Pat's focus is more on Casper, so the pressure is somewhat off of her but she knows what to do to be his perfect partner.

Casper had basically been resting for the past four months since he hyperextended his hind leg when slipping in a muddy spot in the arena at our Memphis tour stop. So he was fresh and Pat had to be careful not to ask too much in case he got sore for the event. That's tough because Casper is now predominantly LB Extrovert when Pat plays with him, so he gets mischievous and playful and wants to blast around! Thanks to careful nutrition, photonic therapy, clever shoeing and Cezanne gently strengthening his joints by walking him over cavaletti every day (see Cavaletti article in this issue) Casper arrived at the NEC in great shape.

Getting Remmer ready looks very different. He's a LB Introvert who is rather unmotivated by pressure! So each day my focus is on getting him to want to play with me. We went on rides around the park, played bareback, played on the ground, played at liberty, focused on some finesse... different combinations on different days, short sessions interspaced with lots of scratches, rest and grazing! I've learned how to prepare Remmer to peak on the big day, and that 'tuning' him up is the worst thing I can do!

There was a dressage and jumping event being staged at Stoneleigh Park so now and then we attracted small groups of people who found out we were there and wanted to watch. In addition there were cameras on our every move with a view to being able to show behind the scenes preparations.

**If you are not yet familiar with our breakthrough approach to reading horses, go to parelli.com and click on "Horsenality" to see*

and download the Parelli Horsenality Profile. Learn how to use it to understand your horse's needs and improve your approach with the help of our new DVD called *Horsenality*, which is also DVD 1 of our 10 DVD Success Series.

ARRIVING AT THE NEC

The day before the event, our horses stepped on the truck for their relatively short trip to the NEC, less than one hour! The backstage area had been covered with woodchips and panels put up to contain our horses and the horses brought in by our Savvy Team.

As we drove into the NEC, the driveway was lined with posters of world famous musicians and rock stars due to have concerts there... Gwen Stefani, Meatloaf, James Last... and then in amongst them were posters of me riding Remmer without a bridle. Surreal!

We walked into the building, up the stairs and into the grandstand. Wow. Super arena, lights, masses of seats, and our own crew setting up with the help of some dedicated and excited volunteer students. Parelli Professionals from all over the world were there, even some from the USA, and we had a Savvy Team that was like the dream team. I knew right then and there if there was even one doubter in the audience, by the time they saw the Savvy Team they'd be on their feet cheering and clapping like everyone else!

The afternoon was devoted to playing with our horses in the arena, feeling out the footing for everything we wanted to do and getting our horses accustomed to something we've never done before... coming through big black curtains through flashing lights and a smoke machine! Oh boy, that was interesting... and by the way, who's idea was THAT? At one point there was so much smoke we couldn't even see the arena! Thank goodness for the Friendly Game.

Then we watched the Savvy Team playing and it was just super. Top, top team and with a couple of newbies who did not look at all out of place. I could not wait to see them turn it on over the next two days.

A nice dinner, some fun encounters with excited students in the lobby, a good sleep and we were ready to go on Saturday.

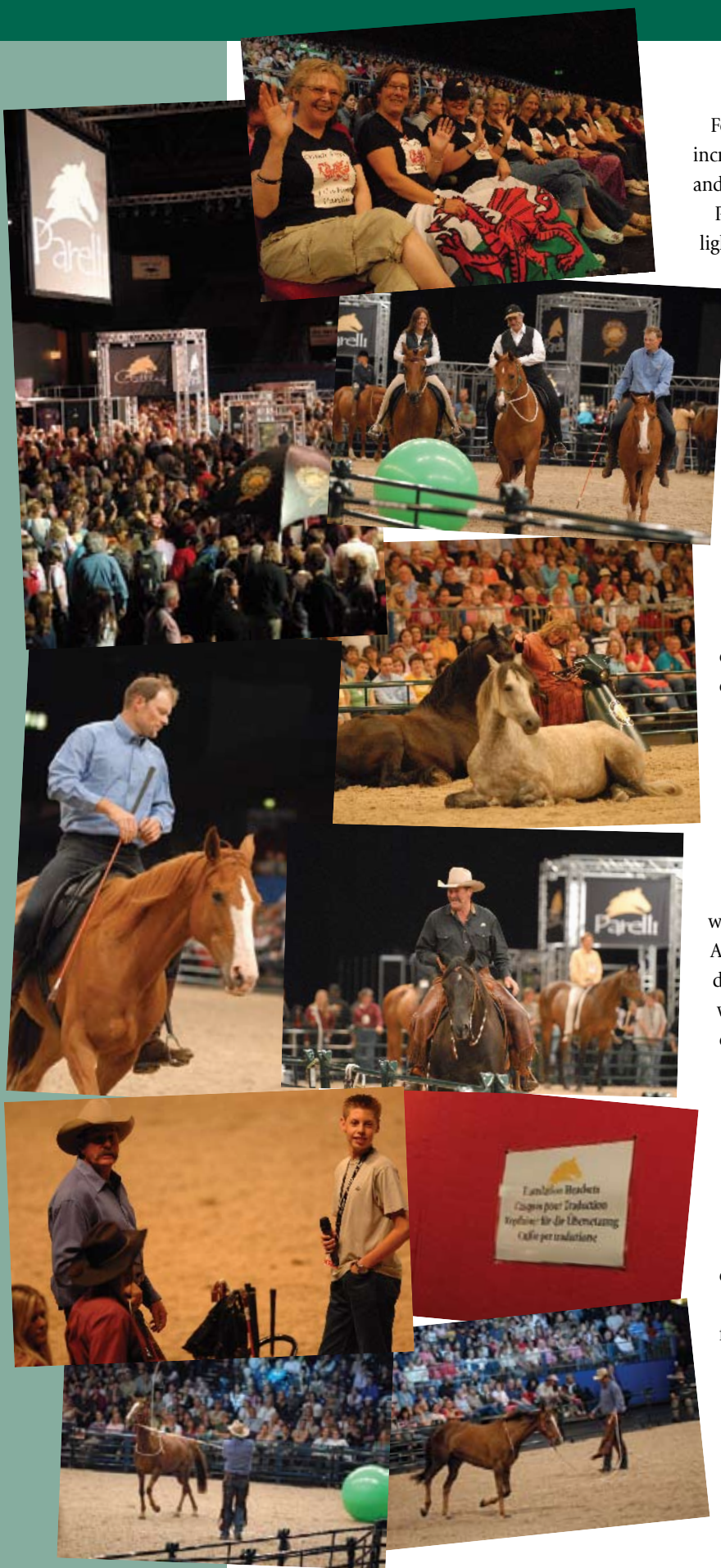
SATURDAY, DAY 1 OF THE UK EVENT

Standing behind those big black curtains, it felt like almost any other event except for a few interesting differences: there were cameras on us from the moment we stepped out of the car; we had a backstage 'dressing room'; we were with our best horses but we were in the UK!

We knew the sequence: final song, short audio-visual of us up on the big screen, the first sounds of our favorite Keith Urban entry song, and then... the announcement and the big curtains pulled back.

Out we went into the smoke and lights, and as we were about to turn Casper and Remmer loose to run ahead of us into the arena, I gasped because the arena was pitch black... couldn't see it at all. I could hear people screaming, could see wide-eyed Remmer and Casper with Pat, but nothing else! Thank goodness, no more than two seconds after that thought, the lights came on and our horses stampeded onto the arena stage.





Four thousand people cheering and clapping makes for an incredible atmosphere of energy! We were off and running.

Presenting on a stage such as the NEC was incredible. The lights, the sound, unbelievable quality. I told my story, Pat told his, Remmer wanted lots of scratches (!) and then we brought in the talented mare who had been bucking off her young Ashley, a promising jumping competitor. His trainers had told him he needed to be sterner with the horse, show her who's boss, but as it turned out that was the opposite of what she needed. She needed confidence, and Ashley was totally relieved because he wanted to be more gentle, not more harsh.

Pat was in fine form, hamming it up and hitting home all at the same time. Within a short time, the mare was a different horse, actually, she was more like who she really was.

Next, it was me with a very complicated horse that turned out to oscillate between LB and RB Introvert. The session was devoted to educating people about individual Horsesanities and how to read behaviors and understand what to do about them. I remember being quite moved at one point thinking about how misunderstood these horses are. She'd found her way into one of our student's hands but not before she'd been tortured by ignorant trainers. She was really afraid of learning and really afraid of losing her dignity.

The final session brought the house down. It started with the incredible Savvy Team (Berni Zambail, Silke Vallentin, Alison Jones, Walter Gegenschatz, Marie - Claire de Selliers, Rachael Morland, Carmen Zulauf) who absolutely wowed the crowd with their strength of bond and high level demonstrations of the Four Savvy's.

After that, Pat came in riding Magic and driving Casper in long reins, transitioned to liberty and I don't think I've seen a better demonstration from the three of them. The air was electric, people were gasping, and Casper turned it on. Coming through the curtains after a standing ovation, an emotional Pat said, "if that's the last thing Casper ever does for me in public, he's earned his retirement. He's done more than anyone could ever ask." He got off Magic and threw his arms around Casper.

Members of the Savvy Team gathered around and I'll never forget the tears streaming down Silke Vallentine's face as she exhorted Pat's performance. This against a background of her own accomplishments as a Parelli Professional, training her own horses to high levels on the ground, a strength of bond that defies superlatives, and all done from a wheelchair.

SUNDAY, DAY 2

Out of the car, cameras tracking us, we prepared to head into the arena again. The dream team (Savvy Team) was out

there wowing the crowd. I climbed up to the sound deck and watched as they confidently and effortlessly played in the arena. I think my highlight was Wally and his mare (a very sensitive, playful, dominant and challenging LB Extrovert) peeled off the tack and proceeded to gallivant around the arena and head towards the upright barrels. Wally wanted to jump, but she had other ideas. After two near misses, she sailed over them as Wally floated with her. Then he came around for another jump and she said no. Two more attempts and still no. I knew the song was about to end, Wally was hamming it up for the audience, but his mare was not wanting to jump.

So Wally stopped his mare several feet before the barrels and got off. He told her to wait there and watch as demonstrated. The crowd was riveted and laughing as he ran and jumped the barrels. Then he turned and beckoned to her and she ran to him, effortlessly clearing the barrels and coming into his arms as the last notes of the song sounded. It brought the house down!

Pat rode in and so started Parelli Horse Church, a session that Pat really pours his heart into as he discusses what horses mean to us in our lives and the responsibility we have in keeping it natural for them. After a lovely performance with Magic, he brought the jumping mare from the day before and had Ashley play with her. It was fun and provocative and educational, and in the end Pat saddled her and showed how to get her confidence under saddle.

After the break it was me and Remmer presenting Fluidity. All was fun and relaxed until we rode to the final song and Remmer amped it up. Not only did he get larger than life and give me a super performance, he would catch sight of himself up on the big screen and be fascinated! It's the first time we've had a standing ovation before we finished.

In came Pat as I exited, and I came back with Casper and Remmer for the finale. Just as we started, the two horses careened around the arena as we danced in the middle. A huge, huge event and one we'll never forget. I think the best comments I heard over the weekend came from event managers and managers of 'normal' horse associations who said "British crowds do not behave like this!" Well, they don't know us naturals!

Thanks and acknowledgements go to so many people involved in making this event such a success, both in the USA and the UK. It's a great, great team that we have behind us without any of whom this would not have been possible, and on top of that, we are

blessed to have many students volunteering their time and enthusiasm to help spread the message of Parelli for a better life with horses.

HOME AGAIN

It took a little over two weeks to get our horses home again, but finally they arrived after some delays in leaving Europe. They arrived in great shape and quickly got back to the business of grazing and asserting who was boss. Only a few weeks later we all had to be ready for our annual Savvy Conference in Pagosa Springs! I'll be writing about that experience in the next issue...

see you then!

Yours naturally,
Linda



Below: Parelli Employees and Volunteers take a quick break to have their picture taken during the show.



Parelli Professionals

Standing left to right: Jackie Chant (NZ), Kaye Thomas (AU), James Roberts (UK), Franco Giani (EU), Rolando Heuberger (EU), Eddy Modde (EU), Angelika Schneider (EU), Adrian Heinen (EU), Marie-Clare de Selliers (EU), Berni Zamball (EU), Martin Wimmer (EU), Walter Gegenschatz (EU), David Zuend (EU), Michael Wanzenried (EU), Russel Higgins (NZ), Carmen Zulauf (EU).

2nd row: Erika Furberg (EU), Michael Grohmann (EU), Anne Kiser (USA), Gianluigi Pini (EU), Patricia Valdhaus (EU), Sieglinde Aumayer (EU), Silke Vallentin (EU).

Front row from left to right: Ursula Schuster (EU), Lyla Cansfield (UK), Carol Coppinger (USA), Victoria Crofton-Wadham (UK), Jodie Platto (USA), Rachel Morland (UK), Alison Jones (UK), Maurice Thibault (USA), Susan Nelson (USA).



PARELLI AT WORK

My horse Suzie is seven years old. I've had her since she was a year old, but really didn't do much with her until about a year and a half ago. She's still not under saddle...

I did finally get on her last month and she acted like it was no big deal. I'm sure this is due to the Parelli work we've been doing. Suzie was a pushy and self absorbed horse. She lives in a pasture with 10 other horses and not only did she push me around, she did the same with the other horses. I didn't know what to do with her and was frightened of her. One day she worked herself up into a tizzy and as she was running circles around me she kicked me. Well that has all changed!

Madison is my five-year-old granddaughter. She lives across the country from me and when she visits the first thing she wants to do is go see the horses. Since Suzie and I have been doing Parelli I've been able to let Madison around Suzie more... she's even sat on her and been lead around numerous times now. Madison has seen me play with her and also watched bits of some Parelli DVD's. The other day after grooming her ground tied, she asked if she could "play" with her.

You'll see the "backing" game... also Madison's "skipping game." She was just a bit disappointed that Suzie didn't skip with her.

—Lisa Viesca, North Carolina, United States



HORSEMAN

*A Passionate Horseman
With humorous pride
With a heart of gold
Filled with love inside*

*A leader of horses
A champion of men
6 keys 10 qualities
They all lie within*

*A Passion a goal
With heart and desire
A dream and a vision
Burning with fire*

*More horse than he is human
That's why he's their friend*

*A pathway a road map
For us he inspires
A love and a passion
For us to acquire*

*A desire sought by many
A gift acquired by few
That of a true horseman
True unity, between two
To savvy savvy is knowing
times 10*

*With an attitude of justice
He ignites our dreams
With a promise that this
Even adults can do
Be in love with the process
and he promises
your dreams can come true*

*And the knowledge
of this horseman
Had a beginning but
has no end
—Colette Hendricks,
Montana, United States*

LOVE LANGUAGE LEADERSHIP



A DIFFERENT STORY FROM MY PARELLI "JOURNEY" JOURNAL

On a Tuesday a couple weeks ago, we brought our horses down from one of their summer grazing fields and put them in a closer field by our house. A short time after, I noticed that they were running around and looking towards the forest that borders their field. They calmed down shortly after and I wrote it off to a fox or something passing by. The next morning they were visibly worried about something near the edge of the forest so I sent my husband out to investigate (with all the horses following behind). What he found, we never expected. A BABY MOOSE! No more than a week old, maybe two at the very most. We tried to scare it back towards the forest, but later that day she was back in with the horses. We shooed her away a second time hoping that her mother would come and get her. On Thursday morning still no sign of the mother in the area and the little

thing was back in with the horses again. We decided we could not leave her there and took her into our barn for her own safety, afraid the horses might do something to her, and we called the authorities. The Swedish government said right off the bat, SHOOT HER! I myself was not having any of that, and in the end we have had a small (but just enough that it worked) media circus to save her, and that a nearby

curious, which also helped with the film crew for the news. Big manly men that said "ahhh."

After she moved on the Park, she got sick. I have been giving her shots and taking her temperature and weighing her everyday. Again using Parelli there has done wonders and even the park owner is getting interested in it. He sees that she accepts things and doesn't want to fight it. He is more use to the hold it down until it stops moving method. But she is making leaps and bounds and is really starting to do well.

Without Parelli I know we would have not been able to have the knowledge to help this little thing adjust to her new surroundings as well and as easily as she has. Just to be able to take the time to wait for her to accept/adjust/investigate certain things. Approach and retreat, a simple concept that unfortunately lacks in most who come in contact or handle animals. And being able to read her when we need to retreat farther than "we" thought was needed. You have given me so much and with this I have experienced something I shall never forget.

—Monica Olsson Wedekind, Sweden

PARELLI WORKSHOP DAY

In July, Ralf Heil, Bernie Zambail and David Zünd held a wonderful and very successful Parelli Workshop Day in Ralf's center in southern Germany. We flew up to participate and help (as we do whenever we can). Here are some pictures from that day.

—Lance B. Minnick, Mallorca, Spain

Moose Park could/would take her. As of Friday that week, late afternoon, the moose park finally got permission to take her and she is safe for now! Here in Sweden you need permission for almost everything and anything from the government. We still have a ways to go to get her "permanent residency" at the park but it looks very good for her with the support of the whole town and many more behind her, the government can't go back now.

During the time I had her, so she was very shy in the beginning and it came very naturally for me to use my "quiver of arrows" from my foal imprinting knowledge I've learned. I have listened with "very large ears" to everything you two say and even used Parelli with my cattle with great results. So, why not a moose? She responded immediately! I could move her around with out any stress with in 20 minutes to where she followed my touch. We started to bottle feed her, which was every two hours and to force an animal to bottle feed that does not trust you is almost impossible, or at least not easy. I worked about an hour with her and she turned around so fast I could not believe it. She became within just a few hours very bonded with me that she cried out after me when I left and when I was in the barn she followed and laid down at my feet, if I moved, she would rise quickly and follow after, then lay down again as soon as I stood still. She would call and run after if I disappeared around the corner. It made feeding easy and she started trusting others shortly after and became very



When I “think” of the word refinement, Pat Parelli comes to mind. Pat, coined the term as I know it.

When I “feel” what refinement is, I actually touch an emotion that connects me to the deepest communication that I’ve ever had with horses. It reminds me, “why” I want so much to “get back in the saddle.”

Having that ultimate, subtle communication, that creates a partnership, a unison of understanding, of being one, will hopefully again be my experience.

For now, I have to accept what limitations fibromyalgia has set in place, and that I don’t have the freedom to straddle a horse’s back. That’s my goal, but, what are the steps to achieve this? Getting out of my own way, and allowing myself to just be where I am, is probably the first step. This relates to allowing the horse to be where she is in the first phases of developing a relationship. I remember when the light came on, after a sticky footed ride, with me trying to “push” my horse into a faster walk. “Get with the horse, before she gets with you,” were the words of wisdom that penetrated my being. “Feeling” her plodding rhythm helped me understand about “getting out of her way.” Just “being with her rhythm,” a magical moment showed up, where our movement together became one.

How fun it was to have walking races, with others on their horses, pushing to be as fast as Diamond with me.

HEATHER BLAKNEY, MILLARVILLE ALBERTA, CANADA

My QH Palomino, Tucson, has taught me so much! In the beginning of our learning together he didn’t try to fight, seldom tried to escape, he just pretty much stared at me and was non-responsive. I thought of this as a great gift, considering the way my other horse acts! I remember considering what I would call his attitude. Is he dull? No way, especially when I am not involved. Is he bored? No way, he loves to follow me around my yard and get into whatever I am doing. I decided it was just a lack of communication.

I remember finding the effective phase 4! He would lean away from the pressure or take about a half a step and stare at me. He is real cute. So cute it’s hard to get frustrated. So I found myself once again letting my horse lead me.

My ideas of what refinement is: One big definition to me is, after all your tries and experimenting, you reach a point where it becomes clearer where you have been, and what went right. Evaluating exactly what was or is happening from certain points of the journey, gets clearer and better.

Refinement is like the ‘recombine’. You watch and hear the natural horsemanship, you read about the psychology of

horses, you follow the lessons and struggle to find the technique physically. Which all leads to the major component, to me, of refinement. You find ‘a feel’.

Refinement is the ‘feel’ you find for where you are, when you are able to recombine the separate aspects of a task or maneuver. Refinement is feeling what you have learned. I didn’t just remember what Pat or Linda said, or how it looked when they did it, or the understanding I got from all the tries, I could FEEL it—from my brain all the way to my feet! When I experienced the feel of something, I was able to slow down, watch Tucson, get soft, and search for the feel of Tucson’s understanding, and that helped my communication. When it was right, I could feel it, and then I knew what actions were effective enough to be consistent with. When I consistently used those actions and searched for the feel of lightness and communication for a phase 1, Tucson started to feel for me! Most of the time, I felt just one step behind Tucson, he tried so hard, waiting for me to ‘get it’.

My first experience of refinement, I think, was when I felt the soft rhythmic relaxation that it took to play the Friendly Game. After that, I really understood the meaning behind—“It’s not about the obstacle, tool or trailer.”

The feel of refinement is what will allow horsemanship to ‘feel’ natural to you, not just have the label “Natural Horsemanship.”

I wish more than anything that I could go back to Florida this winter for the Course 3. I learned so much there last year and had planned to go this year. I have the inspiration, motivation and don’t mind the perspiration, but unfortunately not enough funds for fun this year. I would encourage everyone to go for the new courses, no matter where you and your horse are. You will see and feel and experience deeper levels of your horsemanship.

See you in 2009! Until then Tucson and I will connect and feel our way along, with the help of the Refinement Pack. Having fun and keeping it natural.

TERRY TERRY, CHESAPEAKE, VIRGINIA

To me, refinement means exactly what it says in the Webster’s Dictionary. The definition reads:

To make fine distinctions; use subtlety in thought or speech.

The Parelli Program has further defined this for me. Now it has become thought, speech, and movement. I first met Pat and Linda at their demonstration in Bakersfield, California. I brought my “problem child” Tank; to learn what I could do to help him overcome his right brained responses. After that short meeting, aided by the DVD

Each issue of Savvy Times features a particular subject to which our readers can respond. The deadlines following are when your 250-word submission must be received to be considered for publishing.

February Issue:

**“Horsenalties”
December 1, 2007**

May Issue:

**“Success”
March 1, 2007**

Please send submissions via e-mail to: savvyclub@parelli.com or via U.S. Postal Service to: Savvy Times, c/o Parelli, PO Box 3729, Pagosa Springs, Colorado, 81147. Thanks!

set I was generously provided, Tank and I embarked on a journey of refinement. Refinement not only with him, but for me as well. I learned the important lesson that “less is more.” I learned that my perceptions of how to communicate with him were formed from a purely human level. “It’s a big animal, so I need to make big moves! Speak loudly! Be aggressive!”

It has been one year, now. Tank has traveled from a place of extreme fear, from save his life at all costs; to a place of trust and try. Tank weighs 1400 pounds, and people marvel at the “gentle giant.” Now, he understands what I am asking him. He has refined himself to the degree that he watches me intently, “to hear what I am saying.” I have refined my approach to one of subtlety of movement, of speech, even of thought. Now, if he misunderstands me, I can go back and say, “That wasn’t quite right, try it again” and he inevitably understands and tries.

I will be forever grateful for the doors of understanding opened to me by the Parelli program.

KATHERINE HARDIN, LEMOORE, CALIFORNIA

When I think about one word that best describes what refinement means to me, the word I would chose to define refinement would be lightness. What is interesting is how much my interpretation of this word has changed since starting Parelli Natural Horsemanship. If you would have asked me to define lightness before starting the program I would have used adjectives such as collected, roundness, lofty movement, uphill, and expressive. These words, while there is nothing wrong with them, all refer to the physical state of the horse. Today when I think of the word lightness I think of communication. I think refinement is all about how good your communication is between you and your horse. Can you think something and have it happen? I never believed this was possible and then things changed, I changed. The Parelli Program has given me all of the ingredients for lightness. They are love, language and leadership in equal doses. I have been studying them over the past six years and I am proud to say I am living my dream. My horse Chiron and I are now to a point where sometimes my thoughts are one with his and that lightness is truly what refinement is all about for me.

SUSAN LAFFERTY, VALPARAISO, INDIANA

While I myself do not know how to communicate refinement to my partner as of yet, he is learning it on his own. I have a young Spotted Draft colt that just turned four and is still growing and quite gangly at times. He is however, coming into himself this year and it’s amazing to

watch him start to play with his own body at different gaits and speed in his paddock. He is quite athletic and sometimes tries complicated maneuvers and soon finds himself falling apart and not being able to hold collection, because simply, he’s not coordinated enough to yet. Then he throws some enthusiasm at his lack of control over his big body with a buck and fun cow kick as he takes off in a gallop. He is starting to play with refinement on his own out in his paddock and it’s fun to see his natural ability and to think... hmmm, someday I’ll be able to ask him for that; and look, he’s already practicing on his own without me!! I took him to a Karen Rohlf clinic this past summer where I learned a lot about the ingredients to asking for and setting the horse up for refinement and collection. We play with these from time to time and they are so simple, yet so powerful. As I start L3, I really look forward to taking my finesse to the next level and starting to achieve refinement from a happy, willing, and playful Partner.

LORI MOORE, LINDALE, TEXAS

Often, when I think of refinement, the beautiful words of Mary Ann Kennedy come to mind, “It is a dance between horse and man, spirits in unity.” For me, refinement is the moment when my communication and harmony with my horse is seamless and complete, and we are truly together in a way that sends us both to another place, mentally, emotionally, and physically. It can happen walking around in a pasture, when we both notice a deer at the same moment. It can happen when I think about slowing and he slows. When I ask him to jump a single barrel and he does so with joy, then turns to me, asking “what’s next?” and I already have the answer. When he feels like rolling and running and bucking in play at liberty, and I gladly join in. Refinement is when my horse offers me more, and I know what to do with the offer. Refinement is when I offer more to my horse, because I am more like my horse.

**MAGGIE METZKER,
L3 STUDENT,
CALIFORNIA**



photo courtesy of Maggie Metzker

Meet the Team

Ever wonder how Pat and Linda are able to run a business, two ranches, teach and present their program around the world? They have a great support team to back them up. Here we feature some of those team members and ask them what their jobs are like. This issue meet: Erin Huttinga, Web Developer; Maurice Pomeleau, Ranch Manager; and Roblyn Stitt, Tour Manager.

Where are you originally from?

Erin: I'm originally from West Michigan, around Grand Rapids.

Maurice: I am from a small town in the Province of Quebec, Canada named Beauceville.

Roblyn: Northern Idaho.

How were you introduced to Parelli?

Erin: I was introduced to Parelli through a tour stop in Battle Creek, Michigan in November 2003. My boyfriend, at the time, and I were looking for something to do that weekend and we knew the event was horse related so we said "What the heck, let's check it out." Little did I know that it would change my life.

Maurice: My wife had horses most of her life and though I would help occasionally around the barn, working with horses in the traditional sense did not appeal to me. About five years ago she audited a Parelli clinic and when I saw her "playing" with her horses I was hooked.

Roblyn: I bought my first horse in 1999. (I bought every book I could find on how to take care of a horse, but I still didn't know what to do with the horse). Later that year, I found Pat's Natural Horsemanship book at a tack store.

What's your job title, and how long have you worked for Parelli?

Erin: I work in the Information Technologies department as a Web Developer. I was offered the job just after I graduated from college with my Web Development degree and officially started working for Parelli in May 2005.

Maurice: I am the Ranch Foreman at the Parelli Center in Colorado. This is my second season. I held the same job three years ago.

Roblyn: I am just starting as the Tour Manager. I have worked on tour with Parelli since May 2006.

What does that job entail?

Erin: The web-based part of my job entails just that, internet work. Our most recent project was building the new parelli.com. My role was to take the design developed by our creative team and make it a visual reality. Since our IT staff here is small (six of us), we all wear multiple hats. I help with customer and in-house support, as well as, most recently taking on putting together the weekly e-News.

Erin



Maurice



Roblyn



Maurice: My main focus is to make sure the program participants have a great experience at the ranch. That means I make sure everything is working, the ranch is beautiful and the facilities are set-up for the day's activities.

Roblyn: Serving each and every student and newbie that comes to a tour stop, to make the tour stop experience the best it can be! I do this by leading the tour team as they organize and orchestrate the travel, set up, seminar, and tear down.

What's the best/worst part of your job?

Erin: The best part of my job is being involved in a company that I'm proud of. I love knowing that every day I'm helping to impact the lives of horses and their humans all over the world. The worst part of my job is being in the office all day when I'd really like to be outside playing with my horses (especially since the weather here in Pagosa Springs is normally very nice).

Maurice: Best part of the job—meeting people from all around the world, finishing a project and seeing the results. I also enjoy working outside in a beautiful setting. But probably the best part is being able to watch Pat with horses every once in a while. Worst part of the job—dealing with the mud after a rainstorm.

Roblyn: Best—I am living my dream. I am part of a close-knit international team that provides support for Pat and Linda. We enable Pat and Linda to spend their time researching and developing new ways to teach us to reveal our horse and discover our potential. Worst—there is no worst part to my job, though I do wish there were more hours in the day.

Give an example of what your typical work day is like:

Erin: My typical day is never really the same from day to day. If you'd asked me this question a couple months ago, I would tell you my typical day was spent developing the code for the new www.parelli.com. Now that it's done, I spend my days helping make improvements to the site, answering customer questions and helping to improve how technology is utilized throughout the company.

Maurice: I get up around 5:30 and get a cup of coffee. Then I go to the office and plan my day. I make a list of projects to be done, phone calls to be made and miscellaneous tasks. At 7:30 the team

meets in the yard and we go over assignments. Everyday is different because there are always unplanned items that require attention, but we do our best to keep everything rolling. Though there is always work to be done, I try to leave enough time in the evening to play with and ride my horse, Cassidy.

Roblyn: There is no such thing as a typical day on tour!!! One day I may drive 12 hours cross country, the next day oversee the transformation of an empty arena into a showcase for Pat and Linda, the next two days are full of serving thousands of dedicated students and many people who are getting their first taste of the magic of Pat and Linda. Then I help pack it all back into the semi trailer and head straight to the next venue or back to the office to get ready for the next tour stop.

Are you studying the Parelli Program? If yes, please give us some details of your journey and horsemanship goals. If no or in addition to your Parelli studies, what are your hobbies/interests?

Erin: I am an active student in the program and am currently working on my Level 3 skills (I passed my Level 2 in AU earlier this year). My journey's been great... I started almost four years ago now. Even though I've been riding/showing/playing with horses for about 20 years, the past four years have been the most fun, the most challenging,

and the most rewarding. I've learned more from my horse in my time learning Parelli than I did in all the years before. I had one setback when my "levels" horse was injured a couple years ago. She's back "on her feet," so to speak, and we're moving forward again. My long term goals are to help spread the word about Parelli as an instructor. My short term goals are to continue helping the business end of Parelli reach as many people as possible. In addition to Parelli and horses, I enjoy golfing, off-road driving, hiking, and just about any outdoor activities (what better place to live than in the mountains).

Maurice: I have worked on my horsemanship through the Parelli program, as well as attending clinics and a course at the Parelli Center. My goal is to continue to improve my horsemanship and enjoy having horses as part of my life. I also enjoy working with my wife on our place, *No Goat Ranch* in Texas and, of course, hockey.

Roblyn: I am working on my Level 2. I am driven to raise my level of horsemanship because it helps me on my personal journey. As I become more patient, tolerant, creative and playful with my horse, I also develop those qualities with myself and other people. Horses are recreation for me. Before Parelli, I was a wildlife biologist. Up on a mountain or out in the desert is still the most natural place for me to be.

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Creative with Cavalettis

by Katie Drake

Do you want to know a great and incredibly easy way to keep your horse in shape? Well here's something that can help your horse stay stretched out, strengthen his stifles and build up back muscle, and he doesn't even have to break a sweat. The secret ingredient: Cavalettis!

When Cezanne (Parelli tour horse supervisor) accompanied Remmer, Magic and Casper on their trip to England in late July, she had nearly no room to exercise the horses everyday. Since it was very important the horses stay fit so they would be ready for the Parelli Conference at the NEC, Cezanne had to get creative with ways to keep them in shape. Before the horses left, Linda asked Cezanne to make sure she walked the horses over some cavalettis for about 10-15 minutes every day. Doing this would keep the horses' stifles stretched, and their backs fit.

After arriving in Chicago for their time in quarantine, there was just enough room for cavaletti to be set up down the aisle between stalls. However there was just one small problem, there were no cavalettis! Since it was impossible for Cezanne to have brought them along with her, she set to finding anything in the barn that could be made into cavalettis. She found some boards that had been taken out of some stalls and some extra water buckets, and with that she set up some cavalettis. Everyday Cezanne would walk each horse over the cavaletti for about 15 minutes. This was the only exercise they got while in quarantine.

When Cezanne arrived with the horses to England and they were staying at Stoneleigh Park, there were no cavalettis there either. She didn't have an easy way of running out to buy some, so she used her powers of invention and came up with yet another creative way to make them. This time she found some old fence poles that had been dug up and discarded in a pile. Then she

took several flakes of hay about 6 inches high, and built them up on either side of the poles so they couldn't roll away.

Their final destination was the arena at the NEC in Birmingham. There wasn't an area for the horses to get warmed up before the show, so it was crucial that Cezanne had cavalettis to help get the horses ready. She noticed that there were several long cylinder shaped pieces of cardboard that had been used to transport the posters for the show. She also found several empty boxes that had been used to ship catalogs. She collected them and began building her cavalettis. This time she needed duct tape to secure the cardboard "poles" to the boxes, otherwise they'd just roll right off. Her plan was working perfectly until the guy in charge of packing up the posters realized what Cezanne was using the cardboard for. She assured him she'd have them back to him unharmed and by the time he'd need them again. And she did, minus the one that Magic stepped on, oops!

By using cavalettis, the horses kept perfectly limber, even though they had spent much of their journey in stalls. Cezanne got fitter too! You too can see amazing results in your own horses, and you don't need anything fancy or expensive. As Cezanne would say "you just need to find something long and two things to prop it up with, and you have a cavaletti!"

In addition to all the ways Cezanne thought of, here's one more way you can make your very own out of plastic plumbing pipe. It's quick and easy and very affordable! So start getting creative with cavalettis, and help build your horse's joint strength and muscle tone in a gentle, effective way!

You'll find everything you need in your local Home Depot or hardware store's plumbing department. I suggest building four cavalettis to start. 🐾



WHAT YOU'LL NEED TO GET STARTED

Cavaletti Stand:

SGL 4x3 IN OUTLET Basin (2 per cavaletti)

Schedule 80 electrical conduit pipe (32 in. per cavaletti)

Cavaletti Poles:

10 ft schedule 80* PVC pipe 4 inch diameter (will make 2 cavalettis)

*Any kind of 4" diameter pipe will work whether it is ABS or PVC, however it is important to look for pipe that is schedule 80 as opposed to schedule 40 because it is less likely to crack. Also, finding pipe that has ultra violet protection will hold up best to direct sunlight.

Additional supplies:

Black electrical tape

7/8" drill

Hand saw

HOW TO MAKE THE STANDS

1. Cut 32 inch conduit pipe in half.
2. Drill 2 holes that are 7/8 inches in diameter along the mold lines about 1/2 an inch from the bottom of the largest end of the drain basin. (Diagram 1)
3. Run conduit pipe through holes with approximately 4 inches of pipe sticking out on both sides. (Diagram 2)
4. Wrap several layers of black electrical tape on the conduit pipe as close to the drain basin on both sides so the pipe can't slip out.

HOW TO MAKE THE CAVALETTI POLES

1. Cut 10 ft. pipe in half so you have two 5 ft. poles.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

1. Fit poles in the 3x4 end of the stands.
2. Begin wrapping black electrical tape around outside of stand and gradually keep wrapping down over the pole until the tape is completely on the pole, then begin to wrap back up again until fully around the stand. (Diagram 3)

Drill 2 holes
on bottom
of the larg-
est end of
the drain
basin

1



Run con-
duit pipe
through
holes leav-
ing 4 inches
on each side

2



Wrap with
electrical tape
from stand
down over
the pole

3



instructional photos by Katie Drake

SUGGESTIONS FOR USE

If you are walking your horse over the cavalettis, set up the poles about 2-3 feet apart. If you are trotting your horse you'll probably want to place the poles 3-5 feet apart. These distances are individual and based on your horse's average length of stride. It may take some experimenting to figure out the perfect distance for your horse, but you don't want them so close together that it's difficult for the horse to negotiate the poles, and you don't want them too far apart that the horse has to take more than one stride between poles.





After The Horse is In The Trailer

Q: My question is what do you do after you get the horse in the trailer—that is, tying? I have old timers here saying you should not tie them in a rope halter—only a leather one.

A: We LOVE rope halters because even in a situation like this, if there was a problem, all it would take is a pocket knife to get your horse out of trouble. Parelli rope halters are soft and light, they help us communicate feel more accurately because they're not thick and clunky (like leather ones that are designed mainly for normal leading). Our Horseman's Halter is the only halter we have and use... period.

Many old timers have savvy, but many don't... and even more of them probably don't have the experience of teaching thousands of people all over the world to be successful with horses. Some old timers are very good with horses themselves and, almost no matter what they put on a horse, they would be effective because it is not about the halter, it's about their savvy and feel and ability to connect with horses, getting them to feel safe and trusting. So when they tell you that this kind of halter is the best, they are not giving with it all the years of extraordinary savvy they have! It's not about the halter, it's about the savvy.

All things considered, a soft rope halter is a great all-rounder... for a lot more reasons that being easy to cut loose if things go wrong.

Q: Secondly, if you have a two horse slant and are only trailering one horse, should you allow him the use of the whole trailer or is it better to secure him by closing the divider?

A: Usually the more room a horse has, the better he does because he can pick the position that works for him and move around for even more comfort. That's why stock trailers work so well. When in a stock trailer the horse should be turned loose so he can move around the space available and not feel the sudden restriction of being tied.

A two horse slant really cannot be considered a stock trailer, so you should tie the horse, especially if the back of your trailer is open because you don't want your horse to look over the tailgate at the traffic behind, let alone think about jumping out!

A slant load trailer is far more comfortable for a horse than a straight load because they can balance themselves more easily side to side than they can front to back... just like you would stand in a bus. Shutting the divider is just fine.

Q: I have a horse who seems quite comfortable with loading but wanted to do the savvy thing when securing him. Also, when do you untie? Many thanks for your help.

A: These are very good questions!

Tie him so he can get his chin level with his chest at the shortest

Visualize the sequence of what's going to occur, then organize yourself, the lead rope, the position the divider is going to be in, the position you are going to be in and then... open the divider and only then.

point, no higher, no lower. In this way he can relax and rest without hav-

ing his head held up in an unnatural or uncomfortable position, and yet he can't get low enough to step over the rope.

Before opening the divider, untie your horse. Visualize the sequence of what's going to occur, then organize yourself, the lead rope, the position the divider is going to be in, the position you are going to be in and then... open the divider and only then. This eliminates the risk of a horse getting impulsive about getting out, pulling back or slamming against the unlatched divider as he anxiously moves toward his exit.

Even though educating your horse through Parelli methods to get him to feel safe inside of a trailer and not anxious about getting out is what it's all about, you should never make assumptions. Develop a good, safe protocol for everything you do with a horse, think about what could go wrong and in knowing this, always set things up for success. That is always your responsibility as your horse's trusted leader.

Camping Naturally

Q: I do dressage but actually really wanted to know about horse camping naturally.

I was wondering what game is hobbling and how to prepare the horse for picketing, ground tying, highlining. Are they Friendly Game or more like Porcupine?

What could I do to simulate some of the obstacles and spooks on trails. I was also curious to know how Pat and Linda go horse camping?

A: Hobbling is a combination of the Friendly Game, and the Porcupine Game. The Friendly Game is all about teaching the horse not to panic so it takes lots of approach and retreat so the horse doesn't struggle when it's leg is restricted by a rope (see Level 2), and Porcupine Game is all about teaching the horse to yield to/respect the pressure. Friendly Game always comes first, never make it sink or swim by tying the horse's legs and seeing what happens!

Ground tying is a big subject and not one we can address in a Q & A session like this. Sorry! But we will make sure it gets on a future Savvy Club DVD!

Once you've got your horse to the point that he is relaxed about standing tied for many hours, then you need to know a few important things: Tie high. The slack in the lead rope should not droop lower than the horse's withers.

Leave enough room between horses so they cannot connect when tied. Don't tie close to the tree roots or this can kill the tree.



Learn to tie knots that are reliable,
yet can come undone when you need!
And always carry a pocket knife in case
you need to cut a horse loose.

The more you do with barrels, ditches, tarps, trailers, pedestals, trees, etc. at home... the better. Think in terms of simulation and doing it both on the ground and riding. It's all about building confidence and understanding in the horse. It's 'not about' the trail obstacle... it's all about the trust and respect the horse has for his leader.

This is a self confidence issue. Check out the Liberty and Horse Behavior pack for major information on how to

Finally... Pat and Linda camping? Doesn't happen much these days, but Pat has done a ton of it over the past 25 years! 🐾



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PARELLI DEMONSTRATION

by Tim Smith

A bad fall from a horse had left show jumper Ashley Atkinson's confidence in tatters and his shoulder smashed. His new horse Quintana was bought in the hope she could restore his faith. Little did he know, just four months into the relationship he would be turning to the world's greatest Natural Horseman, Pat Parelli, for help.

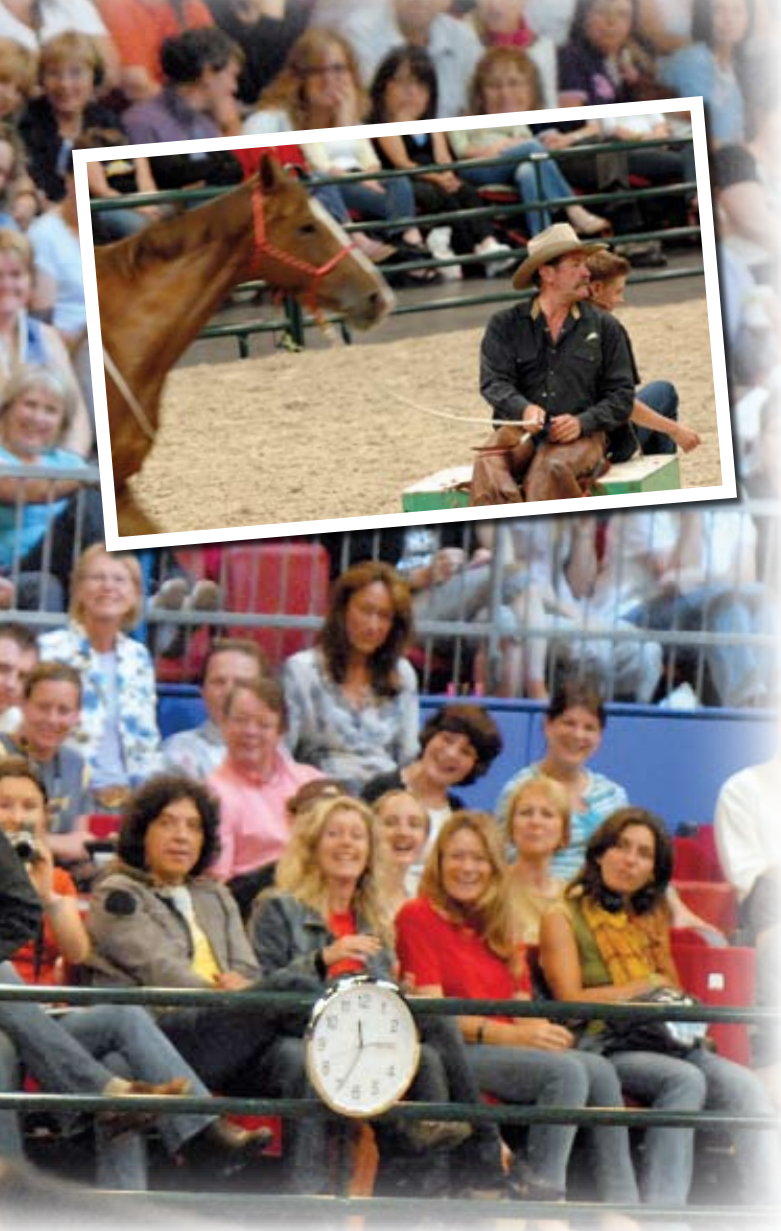
Like many young riders, Ashley Atkinson has a dream of becoming a top show jumper. But following a fall from a horse, his shoulder was badly damaged and his confidence in pieces.

In the hope of helping him to move on to the next step in the ladder, his parents bought him Quintana, an attractive six-year-old, liver chestnut mare who showed a lot of natural ability. However, just a few weeks into the new partnership and before the relationship had even started to gel, their world was falling apart as she became difficult to load, would rear in hand and buck when Ashley rode her. His plans to compete in Equissage Discovery and Petplan Newcomers

competitions soon disappeared out of the window.

At a loss on how to turn around this potentially fatal situation, Ashley watched the Parelli Free DVD. Until then, Ashley knew nothing about Parelli and at the time never thought three months later he and his horse would be under the spotlight, watched by 4,500 people at the NEC Arena in Birmingham, UK.

Deciding to attend a Parelli evening given by Lyla Cansfield from the UK team, Ashley could see the huge benefits the Parelli programme would bring to both him and Quintana. Chatting to Lyla at the end of the evening and keeping in touch with her, Ashley was as-



tounded when he was asked if he would consider putting Quintana forward as one of the horses for the Parelli Celebration at the NEC. He jumped at the chance!

When Lyla rang to confirm Quintana had been chosen, Ashley couldn't believe it and thought—"What have I let myself in for."

Travelling to Birmingham on Friday evening from his home in Sudbury, Suffolk with his dad Kevin, Ashley admits to being uncertain what to expect and the nerves soon set in. Arriving at the NEC and walking into the arena, Ashley soon realised this was the 'big deal'. Quintana soon settled into her pen alongside the other horses and Pat and Linda's three, Remmer, Casper and Magic.

The following morning dawned and soon it was time for Ashley to walk Quintana through the black curtain. A spooking, clearly unrelaxed Quintana gave him a hard time and as the audience clapped, she leaped into the air knocking Ashley's microphone headset off. Struggling to contain her, Ashley's dad, Kevin, stepped in to help and began struggling to deal with her strength and difficult nature too.

Pat asked Kevin to lead Quintana around the arena and past a blue tarpaulin sheet, big green bouncy ball, podium and barrels.

Spooking and darting backwards and forwards this was clearly not going to be an easy ride for all concerned.

Ashley takes up the story:

"We led Quintana in wearing a headcollar and lead rope but Pat soon changed these to a Parelli halter and rope while Pat carried a Carrot Stick.

"When Pat started to work with her, the transformation was amazing. You could see her visibly relax and as he chatted to the audience as if forgetting her and what she was doing—he was actually mimicking what another horse would do.

"His reactions were really quick and he soon had Quintana respecting his space rather than walking all over the person leading her as she usually did.

"Pat created the leadership, changing the direction quickly and she was soon following him round. Quintana appeared so much more confident.

"You could clearly see her bond with Pat. She began to relax and gain confidence.

"With my dad and me, Quintana was a real handful whenever we tried to take her near the barrels, ball and tarpaulin but Pat gradually gave her the confidence to go near them and to interact with them.

"I had been to the NEC Arena before for the Horse of the Year Show and British Open but when I was there as a visitor I never thought I would actually be there as part of a performance, especially a Parelli one.

"When Quintana went into the arena with me and was really ill mannered, I really felt like an idiot, but when I saw how Pat turned her around it was really emotional and I can't thank him enough for helping us.

"During the second day we went back into the arena where Pat helped me from the ground, showing me how to work with her. Although it wasn't easy at first, I gradually improved and it was amazing learning from someone with so much knowledge and natural horsemanship.

"Seeing Pat then ride Quintana was amazing! She was so light and responsive in just the halter. Although there is a long way to go with her, the two days were a massive step forward and in the right direction."

"I will never forget the experience and can honestly say it has changed my life." 🐾



"The first steps are the 'cake,' learning the sport is the 'icing' on the cake, the candles are tuning up before the event and the day of competition is when you light the candles."



Performance Naturally!

by Cynthia McFarland

If there's one thing Pat Parelli understands, it's the horse. His mission is simple but powerful: to share that knowledge with every horse owner out there.

Pat's life has centered on horses since his earliest memories. From his first horse, a grade mare rescued from a California slaughterhouse, he was determined to learn everything possible about the amazing animals that had so thoroughly captured his imagination.

Free-spirited and competitive, he caught rodeo fever while still in high school and went on to win some 25 buckles over a career that spanned 14 years. The 1972 Bareback Rookie of the Year, Pat rode 98% of his horses during his rodeo years and went seven years without ever getting bucked off.

Successful in reined cow horse events throughout the 1970s, he showed a number of good horses and also made headlines riding some remarkable mules, including Thumper, on which he won 50 of 52 reining or reined cow-horse classes. Pat even founded the Clovis Mule Days event and organized it for several years.

But it was not the rodeo arena or the performance world that would make Pat Parelli a household name among horse owners.

In his early days as a horse trainer, Pat's greatest frustration was handing a good horse over to an owner who, despite his or her good intentions, lacked horsemanship skills and knowledge. He realized then that teaching people—not horses—was the way to ultimately change the horses' world for the better.

Since his first clinics held in 1981, his system of Parelli Natural Horsemanship has literally spread around the globe, using psychology and communication in the form of love, language and leadership. Teaching people how to be successful with horses without fear, force or intimidation, his program has reached horse lovers around the world—from backyard first-time owners to Queen Elizabeth herself.

Although Pat notes that some 80% of horse owners worldwide do nothing competitive with their horses, the remaining 20% are into performance and many compete seriously, some at the highest levels.

For those riders who choose to compete, Pat encourages them to always put the horse—not the event—at the center of their focus. We caught up with him on a recent afternoon to discover his thoughts on the performance world, and to learn how riders can pursue those goals naturally.

A LOT OF PEOPLE OWN HORSES AND RIDE BECAUSE THEY WANT TO COMPETE. WHAT IS YOUR OUTLOOK ON THE PERFORMANCE WORLD FROM A NATURAL HORSEMANSHIP PERSPECTIVE?

"To be natural with horses you have to put the principle before the purpose. Where people get in trouble is becoming too time—and goal—oriented. The date of an event becomes imperative even if the horse can't catch up.

"A lot of people make the process look like the product, meaning they train the way they envision competing. For

The
Performance
Cake when
baked with
Savvy...



Day of the race or competition

Tune up before the event

Sport training

Levels 1-4 foundation

example, if they ride dressage, then they train as if they were riding a dressage test. A lot of people try to start with the fundamentals of performance when the horse is still having confidence issues. He still hasn't really decided that riding is a fun thing to do.

"One of the things Tom Dorrance said is that we have to 'be particular without being critical.' The higher and loftier their goals, the more people tend to be critical.

"With Parelli
Natural Horse-
manship, we
follow the formula
we've created. We
take care of safety

issues first. Then the 'fun' things come second. The pursuit of excellence is third and the fundamentals of performance are fourth.

"The first steps are the 'cake,' learning the sport is the 'icing' on the cake, the candles are tuning up before the event and the day of competition is when you light the candles. Parelli puts more emphasis on building the cake than the icing and the candles. If you've ever been to a wedding and seen a cake that is beautiful on the outside with extra thick icing, but when you have a piece it doesn't taste good, then you'll understand why we put so much importance on the cake itself."

HOW DO YOU LOOK AT THE PERFORMANCE WORLD TODAY AS
OPPOSED TO HOW YOU LOOKED AT IT BACK WHEN YOU WERE
TRAINING HORSES INSTEAD OF PEOPLE?

"Back then that was the only world I knew, so my horizon was much shorter and my scope much narrower. Now I can see what the whole horse industry is about. This perspective gives me more purpose, principle and patience to give the horse what he needs. I always say that any goal is possible as long as the horse is in charge of the principles and the time line.

"If I was still training performance horses, I'd still emphasize teaching horsemanship before sportsmanship. If I were to be a sport trainer, I think I'd have to be more of a personal coach. I would put about 75% of my effort into being a coach and only about 25% into training the horse.

"My advice to anybody who wants to be an equine professional is to realize that it's not a horse business, it's a people business. You need to help people and become an aid to them rather than a crutch."

WHAT DO YOU SEE DIFFERENT IN THE
PERFORMANCE WORLD TODAY FROM HOW
IT USED TO BE?

"The number one difference is that most people today who are riding in competition are people who just got into horses as adults. Some of them have only had a horse for two or three years. A lot of the trainers are ex-youth show 'stars' who've gotten jobs as

assistant trainers and have only ridden finished horses. Back in my early days, we rode every nag that came along!

"I have to say that the level of talent in the horses is much higher today than it used to be. Some of the horses that are considered discards or 'throw away' horses today would have been top of the heap back in the 1970s.

Unfortunately, I see a higher and higher attrition rate today in many sports, including dressage, reining, cutting,

and working cow horse events. More and more horses don't make it or are used up by the time they're four or five years old. With Parelli, our

horses are just getting started by the time they're four and five. We're looking for partners for life. Magic is a great example. She's 15 this year and I'm competing on her in cutting and roping off her now, too.

"We put about 1000 hours of foundation training on our horses before we start the sport training. Our concept is having horses that are not worn out mentally, emotionally, or physically. My job is to deliver the training in such a palatable way that the horse feels like the luckiest horse in the world, like he's living his dream through our partnership. I see a lot of horses in the performance world that look like the unluckiest horses in the world. They're depressed and not having any fun at what they're doing."

HOW DOES SOMEONE KNOW THEY HAVE THE RIGHT HORSE FOR
A SPECIFIC DISCIPLINE? HOW DO YOU SUGGEST THEY CHOOSE THE
RIGHT HORSE?

"There are four elements to success: talent, skills, dedication, and luck. You need all four to succeed at the highest performance levels.

"If I'm looking for a competition horse, I ask questions of the horse. For example, if I'm looking for a cutting horse, I would ask: Are you innately a cow horse? Will you let me help you? Are you a show horse?

"The answer has to be yes to those three questions in order to have a successful competition horse. If the answer is yes, then we're on our way. If the horse doesn't really like the sport enough, he's not going to take the rigors of training very well.



"Remmer is not a highly self-motivated or energetic horse. My challenge in his training is to get him mentally interested so he wants to do more. But on the day of the show, that extra energy he gets from the audience helps light him up!" —Linda



"Magic is an extremely 'hot' and emotional horse. She always expects the worst so most of the time I'm working on her confidence. She trains better than she shows because she doesn't handle pressure very well, so my foundation has to be kept really solid." —Pat

"The reason you want a 'show horse' is an important one. I've had horses that were really good cow horses and trained really well, but when they got to the show, they were 20% less the horse there than they were at home. I've had other horses do well at home but do really well at the show. I understand this because I'm the same way; I'm a really good horseman at home, but I become a super horseman at a seminar. When it's lights, camera, action, I turn into Super Pat! Not all horses are that way, but that's the kind of horse you want if you're going to compete."

SOME PARELLI STUDENTS HAVE SERIOUS PERFORMANCE GOALS. HOW DO YOU APPROACH THAT WITH THEM?

"I recommend that they follow my program through Level 4, no matter what sport they are interested in. Then I encourage them to find a Parelli-friendly trainer of high caliber in their particular sport, someone who's in congress with us philosophically, for example, David and Karen O'Connor in three-day eventing, Walter Zettl for dressage, Craig Johnson in reining, or Darren Simpkins for cutting.

"We can help you with the cake and then let the other professionals help you with the ins and outs of sport training.

"You also need to be realistic and realize that reaching high level performance takes time. We live in an instant gratification society, but you have to take the time it takes; there's no way around it. A lot of people want to go to heaven, but no one wants to die to get there!"

ONCE THEY GET TO THAT LEVEL, IS THERE A BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HOW PARELLI STUDENTS PURSUE PERFORMANCE FUNDAMENTALS AND THE WAY THE REST OF THE HORSE WORLD PURSUES THEM?

"When you get to the fundamentals of performance in our program it looks much like any other professional program.

When you get to high level performance, such as reining, cutting, dressage, there's very little difference between our program and other world class competitors. We just spend more time on foundation (cake) and fundamentals than on sport training.

"Our whole idea is to get the horse to have so much dignity and exuberance that he becomes a competitor for life. Then you don't have to get another horse because you've burned him out.

"We believe in equine partners for life, students for life, and even employees for life with the people who work with us. We're most known among recreational riders for safety and fun, but we've had numerous professionals who've used our program to win in various disciplines.

"Some of our students have been people like Darren Simpkins from Australia, who showed Reys Dual Badger (Dual Rey x Lipshy) to 2006 NCHA Horse of Year honors.

Hall of Fame jockey Julie Krone is another Parelli student who was at the top of her field and is now studying with us. Bob Duncan, formerly the head starter for the New York Racing Association, has been a Parelli student for years and brought natural horsemanship principles to schooling Thoroughbreds in the starting gate at New York racetracks. Lauren Barwick, who is considered the number one-ranked Para-equestrian in Canada, is a Parelli student and is planning to compete at the next Paralympics to be held in China."

IF YOU COULD CHANGE ONE THING ABOUT HOW PERFORMANCE HORSES ARE TYPICALLY TRAINED AND PREPARED FOR COMPETITION, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

"The one thing I would change is to up the minimum age for horses in performance—whether it be racing, showing or any other competition event—by 18 months. So for example, instead of a horse coming four years old in a competition, he would have to be five and a half years old.

"I would also add in 'longevity awards' to horses that are still competing successfully as they age. I would reward horses that are competing well when they are older, such as into their teens, and give them huge praise, recognition and material rewards."

WHAT DO YOU WANT THE FUTURE TO LOOK LIKE IN TERMS OF PERFORMANCE/COMPETITION FOR HORSES AND HUMANS?

"I'd like to see more horses taken to top levels of performance, but in such a provocative and natural manner that the horse doesn't even know he's being 'trained.' It should be just like a child learning to talk; one day they say their first word and the next thing you know they're having a conversation. It's just a natural occurrence and that's the way it should be with horses." 🐾

COU

IN
Colorado & Florida



RESSES

by Kaffa Martignier

"HORSEMANSHIP CAN BE OBTAINED NATURALLY..."

"Horsemanship can be obtained naturally, using communication, understanding and psychology, rather than mechanics, fear, and intimidation." These were the opening words of the very first seminar that Pat Parelli ever presented to the public, in 1982.

Who would have guessed then, that the same sentence would still be around in the Courses taught by Linda and Pat Parelli's in-house Faculty at the Parelli Centers today, a quarter of a Century later.

A BACKYARD CLINIC ...

In 1989, Pat Parelli came to a town near where I was working, and he put on a two day clinic—a small event for a tiny rural community in a remote Outback Australian town.

It was then seven years since Pat's first seminar. The principles and concepts that Pat had learned from his mentors were yet to take the shape of a program and philosophy that would take the world by storm. But, thanks to the promotional and organizational efforts of an Australian named Linda Paterson, something was beginning to brew.

THE BIRTH OF AN INDUSTRY

Over the next decade, Parelli Natural Horsemanship was named, the Seven Games were named and described, and a Home Study Levels Program and an Instructor Program were born. Parelli Clinics were taught in Australia, in Europe and in the US. Led by the efforts of an impassioned Linda and Pat Parelli and supported by a small eclectic group of dedicated fans, students and Parelli Instructors, an entirely new industry was conceived and grew and became—"the natural horsemanship industry."

A PLACE TO SHARE FROM THE SOURCE

During all those years of travel and endeavor, Linda and Pat Parelli held one dream close to their hearts: that some day, there would be a place where truly dedicated students of Parelli Natural Horsemanship could come to study and immerse themselves in the Parelli principles and philosophy.





In addition to the Clinics put on around the world by Parelli Instructors, some day there would be a place where students could come to study for longer periods of time, right at the source. Initially with Pat and Linda themselves and later with an in-house Faculty, hand picked and intensively trained to share the Parelli message in its purest form.

TO GO THERE SOMEDAY...

In 1996, Pat and Linda found the place. In a beautiful valley near Pagosa Springs, Colorado, they found the property that would become the Harvard of Horsemanship—the first Parelli Center.

While the building of the Parelli Center began, I was still working in Australia, gathering cattle on horseback, using working cattle dogs, taking care of cows and calves. Like so many other horse people, before I heard of the Parelli Center I wasn't searching for anything; I was already supremely satisfied with what I was doing. But then a new dream was born for me—to go there someday. To see and feel it for myself. To meet Pat and Linda and immerse myself in a different world.

While I was riding in the dust of herds of cattle, I would hear the roar of a jet airplane overhead. I would crane my neck to see

it, and I would think, "Perhaps its going to America." I would dream about what it would be like to be riding at the Parelli Center, with Pat Parelli or one of his Instructors. I did what so many Parelli students, in every walk of life, have done—I nurtured my dream until it led me to Pagosa Springs in 1999.



Horseman's Heaven on Earth—the spiritual home of Parelli. To say that studying at the Parelli Center was everything I had dreamed it would be and that it changed me profoundly is true—but what an inadequate description!

THE PARELLI CENTERS TODAY

Today there are two Parelli Centers—a summer Center near Pagosa Springs, Colorado, and a winter Center near Ocala, Florida. The Centers offer a curriculum of three, two-week courses: Course 1, Liberty and Horse Behavior; Course 2, Fluidity I; and Course 3, Fluidity II.

Students can take one course at a time, or more than one—studying for two, four or six weeks consecutively. We also have students who attend two full course cycles back to back—12 weeks of immersion at the source—and others who have attended the 6 week cycle repeatedly with breaks in between.

A PROFOUND LEARNING EXPERIENCE

When I first came here almost a decade ago, the Parelli Center experience had the capacity to change lives and fulfill dreams. That capacity has continued to grow and today the spirit, the energy, the essence of the Parelli Centers is deeper and richer than ever.

The current Parelli Center Courses and the Faculty who teach them deliver a unique message found no-where else. Cutting edge teaching strategies and dynamic new insights around the timeless principles of Parelli Natural Horsemanship have resulted in a learning experience that, if you're open to it, will change you deeply, profoundly, and forever. ✨

*An Experience
like no Other...*

LIFE CHANGING...

"My time with you all on that wonderful facility has been nothing short of life changing. Each time I think of the numerous things which have worked their way down deep into my consciousness, the word that crops up again and again to best describe this process is AWARENESS.

"I have become more aware of so many things... my horse's body language, my own body language, the power of my focus, of my feel and of my timing and of the power of doing nothing. I have become more aware of how light my phase one could be and of the slightest try from my horse. I have become more aware of all four moments in a second, and how suddenly counting those seconds can cause me to become direct line. I have become more aware of the freedom we can experience by taking that 50:50 chance, accepting the consequences and then moving on. I have become more aware of the power in a smile, providing it's a whole body smile, of the many clever disguises that the predator in me can assume if I'm not watchful, and of justice without blame.

"But perhaps most importantly, I am now AC-CUTELY AWARE that I'm only just scratching the surface, and that is probably the most exciting thing about what I've learned so far.

"My horse and I would like to thank you all, sincerely and without exception, for taking on the complex task of being Pat and Linda's enablers and for doing such a fantastic job."—Amanda W.

A GREAT GIFT...

"The confidence I gained has catapulted me to a state of mind now where fear—fear of failure, fear of injury, fear of mistakes—is no longer the reigning emotion, and that has allowed my learning and enjoyment of Prince and of most other aspects of my life to expand enormously. Fear is such a hobbling emotion and I never realized how damaging it is and how it stunts one's growth and imagination.

"Up to that day, I tried my best to lose the fear, never realizing that I was looking for relief in the wrong direction—outside myself. That day, I learned to look to myself. I felt such a load lift from my shoulders and for the first time, not only did I love Prince, I liked him, because I gave

up all my expectations. I guess I had always done all my Parelli tasks with the intent that it would make him "ready to ride". Truly that day I learned a deeper meaning of "it's not about the..."; it's not even about the relationship so that you can ride safely or be a competent horseman; it's just about the relationship, period.

"What is most beautiful is all that I have learned on account of my time with you will make me a better parent. You have empowered me. You taught me about recognizing boundaries so as to accelerate learning; about acknowledging and managing fear; about celebrating the small victories; and about manifesting and visualizing the positive endpoints. Now I am better equipped to start my daughter from a position of strength—it took me 40 years to get here, but imagine where she will go starting from a place ahead of the curve? You are truly wonderful people.

"You really filled me up with information and you also gave me techniques to work through frustrations as my knowledge ran out. You gave me a license to experiment, taught me to stop "shoulding" on myself, and because of that, I finally began to recognize the giant breakthroughs that Prince and I made instead of feeling like a failure. I consider all of this a great gift from you and am most grateful for the time I was privileged to spend there.

"Thanks for making the dream possible."—Your biggest fans,
Cathy D. and Prince



OWNERSHIP...

"If Pat & Linda called my house this month I wouldn't have a question. Oh it's not because I have all the answers and savvy I need. No, it's because now I know I have the tools, technique and understand the principles to figure out just about any puzzle and I want ownership of the solution.

"What a gift, what an amazing Course. Thank you for this opportunity."—Linda A. & Melody

TO CARRY ON THE PROGRAM...

"I was especially impressed by the teaching staff. They are not only knowledgeable about the Parelli program, but they were all personable, outgoing, friendly and possessed exceptional teaching skills. I have been concerned about the direction of the program as Pat and Linda back off from teaching, but I can see that the Faculty is being well-prepared to carry on in Pat and Linda's style."—Joan R.



Special News for 2008 Courses!!!

Exciting news for all you committed students (or should we say "obsessed...") who take the journey, make the time—and all that entails—to travel to the Parelli Centers next year...

While at your course, you will go into a drawing for a chance to win a 2-week Course!!!
(2 week course = 1 chance, 4 week course = 2 chances, 6 week course = 3 chances!)

If you haven't already reserved your course, check out the 2008 schedule and booking details at www.parelli.com!



A Horsemanship Experience BIGGER Than Anything You've Ever Dreamed...

Pat Parelli Centers COLORADO & FLORIDA

Additional information on courses can be found at www.parelli.com or by calling 1-800-642-3335.

Remember: Savvy Club members receive 35% off!



2008 FLORIDA

Course 1: Liberty & Horse Behavior
Jan 27–Feb 8, Mar 16–28,
Oct 26–Nov 7

Course 2: Fluidity I—Freestyle Feb 10–22,
Mar 30–Apr 11, Nov 9–21

Course 3: Fluidity II—Finesse Feb 24–Mar 7,
Apr 13–25, Nov 23–Dec 5



2008 COLORADO

Course 1: Liberty & Horse Behavior
May 18–30, Jul 6–18, Aug 24–Sep 5

Course 2: Fluidity I—Freestyle Jun 1–Jun 13,
Jul 20–Aug 1, Sep 7–19

Course 3: Fluidity II—Finesse Jun 15–27,
Aug 3–15, Sep 21–Oct 3

Some spots are still available for 2007 courses. Current course availability can be found at www.parelli.com.



Your HORSE is the ONLY one who can tell you if your SADDLE is RIGHT!



A DAMAGING Saddle:

Too Narrow / Bars block horse's shoulders / Shaped to fit a stationary horse / Doesn't distribute weight properly / Puts weight on forehead

Limiting a horse's posture and the way a horse's essential tools (vertebrae, ribs, and cannon bones) fit into his body when at motion

Weaknesses that creep, poor posture

This horse is confined in front stance and/or loose posture when at motion

Head/neck strong and, not enough angle in joints, too close/difficult

Don't shape horse's cannon

An awkwardly placed pommel is damaging for horse, front legs inefficient

Don't look of horse to "stretch"

Restricted shoulder

Poor posture

More is more developed under the neck ("bad neck") pushing the chest

Front legs look short

Front rider's weight forward, causing hindquarters engagement

Front back gets stiff and hollow

Weak, sloppy cut, can't use hindquarters properly

Belly sag

Horse is hard to maneuver

Weight on front, too close shoulder

Feet forced along with front end

Hindquarters engagement

Hindquarters up, more confident, heavy seat

Short, sloppy stride, heavy on front end

X WALK

- Short, loose walk
- Weight on front end
- Unhappy ears
- Hindquarters up
- Canters tail up
- Hindquarters up
- Tends to step on front end

X TROT

- Doesn't like trotting
- Steps, hocks pull or gets better
- Struggle to sit
- Head comes up
- Unbalanced
- Picks up with neck
- Short, sloppy stride
- Shudders
- Tense, confused through body

X CANTER

- Difficult to transition into canter / back into canter
- Weight on front end
- Head/neck, side out, strong tail
- Hollow back
- Can't collect
- Shudders
- Doesn't stretch the gait
- Gets impatient
- Front end "tapers"
- Confused neck
- Dismounts

POOR POSTURE / POOR MUSCLING

POOR POSTURE / DISCOMFORT

MOVEMENT RESTRICTED

A GOOD Saddle:

Wide Gullet / Bars don't block shoulders / Shaped to fit a moving horse / Distributes weight over large surface area / Puts weight on hindquarters

Traps are developed

Don't shape horse's cannon

Head/neck under hindquarters

Good posture and muscling

Lighter belly

Withers level and "uphill"

Muscles built on top of neck

Allows rider to sit in their seat and feel the horse's motion

Weight is balanced and allows back, allowing hindquarters engagement

Full spine can spring and move

Head legs pointing and powerful

Belly lift

Horse is easy to maneuver

Freedom of shoulder: can be positioned behind the girth, give horse full range of motion

Hindquarters down, more confident

Hindquarters engagement

Soft back

Longer, more confident stride

✓ WALK

- More balanced
- Less tense
- Longer stride
- Head comes up
- Hindquarters down, steady leg
- Steps on hind end
- Stands back
- Lifts hind end / lifts

✓ TROT

- Sitter, springer
- Longer stride
- More confident
- Maintains gait
- Hindquarters
- Chest back
- Front end (no blocking of shoulders)
- Allows back to flex diagonally
- Allows hindquarters to spread

✓ CANTER

- Hind can stretch forward
- More confident
- Maintains gait
- Weight on hindquarters
- Working up
- Long neck
- Sitter and springer stride
- Full can be high in collection or legless stride

IMPROVED POSTURE & MUSCLING

IMPROVED POSTURE & COMFORT

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

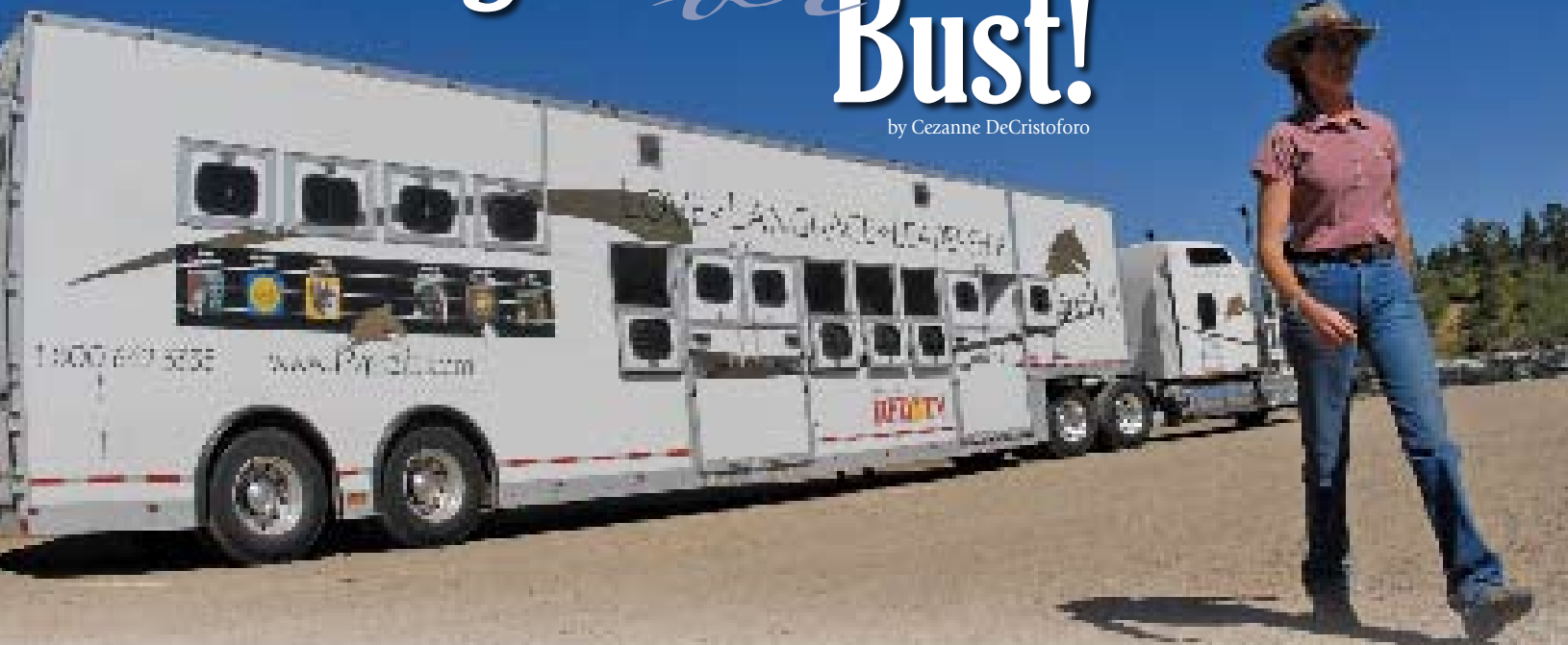
"We had so much trouble finding saddles that did not make horses uncomfortable, clumsy or have difficulty performing, that we knew we had to design our own."

Uma and Pat Parelli

www.parellisaddles.com

England or Bust!

by Cezanne DeCristoforo



On June 25th, Casper, Remmer, Magic and I loaded up and were off to the UK for the 2007 World's Largest Natural Horsemanship Celebration. All I could think about was, "just get them to England." I didn't pack much stuff, just the essentials: horses, saddles and a few things to keep them clean.

After three days of travel we arrived in Chicago on Friday morning. Our flight was scheduled to leave the following day at 6pm.

With limited space and time I spent most of the layover time walking up and down the aisle of the barn. It was only about 15 feet wide but we made it work. I also took some empty water

buckets; a few spare boards and made some cavallettis to keep the horses loose. The next evening we loaded up the transport truck in preparation to leave for the airport but soon found out that our plane was grounded due to engine problems. Finally, at about 10pm we left for the Chicago airport. The cargo box for the horses was tight, but these three veteran travelers piled in.

In fact, there was just enough room for me to squeeze in the front of the horses and their feedbags. With all four of us inside the box, we were lifted up to the cargo bay and loaded onto the plane. Within an hour, we were in the air and on our way; this ended up being the fastest load-to take off time for the horses through the whole trip. After lift-off the airline attendant showed me where I would be sitting. During the flight the horses were very relaxed. I would get out of my seat occasionally and check the horses to make sure they had water and see that they were comfortable.

Nothing about flying seemed to bother these guys. We landed in Ireland at around 10am (CST) the following day. While going through customs there was no problem with my papers but there was some hang-ups with the horse's paperwork. Some fancy talking and 5 hours later we were released. Now all I had to do was take the horses on the eight-hour drive up to Stoneleigh Park. What a beautiful drive, there were hedges and stone walls and old barns; the countryside was expansive rolling hills with sheep and cattle throughout. Unfortunately for me, this was the most of Ireland and England I saw the whole trip. The lorry driver (aka. horse

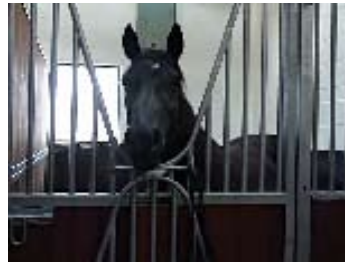
truck driver) and I kept busy by talking about the differences in America and England. Finally, after the long day, we pulled in at midnight. The next day the horses got some well deserved time off, relaxing and running around the newest Parelli center. I toured the new office and settled down at the lodge in Stoneleigh. Across from the Parelli office is the cottage where the Queen stays when the Royal Show goes on.

Pat and Linda arrived the next day and they were so happy to have their top horses there. It only took a week but we had flown and drove over 5000 miles. The horses were in top form and ready to put on a great show. While Pat and Linda rode and prepared, there was a video camera team following them. At the same time there was a dressage competition going on at Stoneleigh Park, which created quite a buzz in the air. It was so funny to see all these people dressed up and so serious about riding yet many of the competitors wanted to see this cowboy riding. Others wanted



photo courtesy of Caco

to talk to him and just for fun Pat would do a little Piaffe with Magic. They were amazed! During the few days leading up to the NEC show, the people at the dressage show started to come out of the woods. They wanted to catch a glimpse of the cowboy doing dressage or backing his horse up without a bridle. And they were all mesmerized by Linda. The celebration was a huge success and when the time arrived Pat and Linda returned home. Once again it was just Casper, Remmer, Magic and I who stayed behind for a few more days. With a few more complications getting in the air to cross the Atlantic we took off from Amsterdam on Saturday morning. The plane ride home was just as easy as the others. I rode up the lift with the horses, fed and watered in very tight quarters and tried to get some sleep. When we got to New York, it was late. We still had a two-hour drive to the quarantine facility and when we finally rolled in to quarantine, it was after 1am. After being in quarantine for two days the horses were released and the Parelli horse hauler picked up the new world travelers and headed for home. 🐾



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PARELLI BRIDLE *WISDOM*



Selecting the Right Bridle at the Right Time

By Linda Parelli

At each level of development in the Parelli Program, students are guided to the type of equipment that works in concert with the approach and techniques used and that makes the most sense to the horse. Pat Parelli calls this "BRIDLE WISDOM."

Having the right tool is consistent to the principle of the Six Keys of Success: Attitude – Knowledge – Tools – Techniques – Time – Imagination; and *Tools* should have no more or no less importance than the other five keys.

To put it simply, it's not just about the bit! However, having the right bit can make a world of difference for the horse, both in terms of what you are trying to achieve and in the type of mouthpiece offered in the bit. Different Horsenalties* have different preferences, and many horses have had their confidence ruined from being ridden in the wrong bit or with rough hands.

**Refer to the section on Bit-Anality in this article.*

There are three main stages in developing the horse using the Parelli Program:

- Control – first on the ground, then riding FreeStyle using one rein for control.
- Contact – using two reins for developing more precision.
- Collection – for more elevated and athletic gaits.

...and there are seven types of bridles/bits that we recommend as you continue to progress, some of which are optional.

CONTROL—ONE REIN FOR CONTROL

Parelli Levels 1–2:

GROUND SKILLS and FREESTYLE RIDING

1. Halter & 12' or 22' Line for ground skills and preparing



your horse for riding: The Parelli Program advocates safety by not riding your horse until you have developed a harmonious relationship with communication and understanding on the ground. The calmer, lighter and more responsive you can teach your horse to be on the ground, the calmer,

lighter and more responsive he will be in the hackamore or bridle when you ride. The soft, fine diameter rope halter discourages a horse from leaning against the pressure and offers instant comfort and lightness when the horse responds

positively. The 12' and 22' lines are constructed of a 5/8" smooth yachting braid that makes it easy to slide through your hands as you play with your horse.

In Freestyle Riding, you ride with one hand in the middle of your reins and activate only one rein at a time for turning with a Direct Rein or getting control through Lateral Flexion. These bridles are used with Parelli Horseman's Reins.

2. Natural Hackamore: The ideal first step when riding. By



staying out of the horse's mouth, you can teach your horse to respond to directions through the reins without hurting him when needing to take control or from losing your balance or making mistakes. Many horses improve dramatically when changing from a bit to the Natural Hackamore,

for exactly that reason and because the horse has been developed first on the ground, it makes a lot of sense to him. The Natural Hackamore has reins with a built in lead rope (sometimes known as mecate reins) which enables you to prepare your horse on the ground before riding, to be able to dismount quickly and gain control on the ground, and to tie your horse safely.

3. FreeStyle / Trail Bridle with Loose Ring Snaffle,

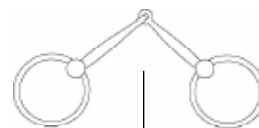


Horseman's Reins & Rein Leathers:

This simple loose ring snaffle is ideal for riders who like to ride primarily on loose reins and focus on activities like trail riding. The secret is being able to use Horseman's Reins (also known as mecate reins with built in lead rope) and Rein

Leathers enabling the rider to adapt to a number of practical situations: ground skills with reins extended to 12' or 22', tying safely by forming a collar, driving your horse ahead of you, etc. It also allows the rider to pick up two reins on occasion without bothering the horse because the Rein Leathers act as a hinge creating a light connection without tight reins.

Many riders will be happy to stay in the hackamore or loose ring snaffle because it fits their purpose or activities perfectly. Once they are interested in pursuing



more precise or higher levels of riding skill and training, they will move up to the Contact stage, in which the tools are better suited for communicating more specifically and with two reins.

Note also that a rider who is more focused on precision riding (vs trail riding) can progress from the Natural Hackamore directly to the Cradle in the Contact stage, which is when the FreeStyle / Trail bridle is optional.

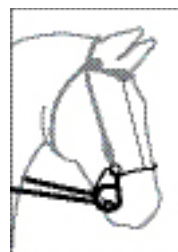
CONTACT—TWO REINS FOR COMMUNICATION

Parelli Levels 2–3: Riding FREESTYLE (Casual Rein) and FINESSE (Concentrated Rein)

As you begin riding with more precision you need to ride with Concentrated Reins so you can have gentle contact with your horse's mouth. This enables you to make more frequent transitions, ride patterns with more accuracy and to begin asking your horse for latitudinal, longitudinal and vertical flexion. These bridles are used with Parelli Finesse Reins.

Note: The single-jointed snaffle bit is NOT a good tool for riding with contact. This is because the bit folds in half from pressure applied by two reins and can pinch the bars of the horse's mouth causing the horse to either throw his head up or to come behind the bit to avoid contact.

4. Parelli/Myler Cradle Bridle: A breakthrough for riding

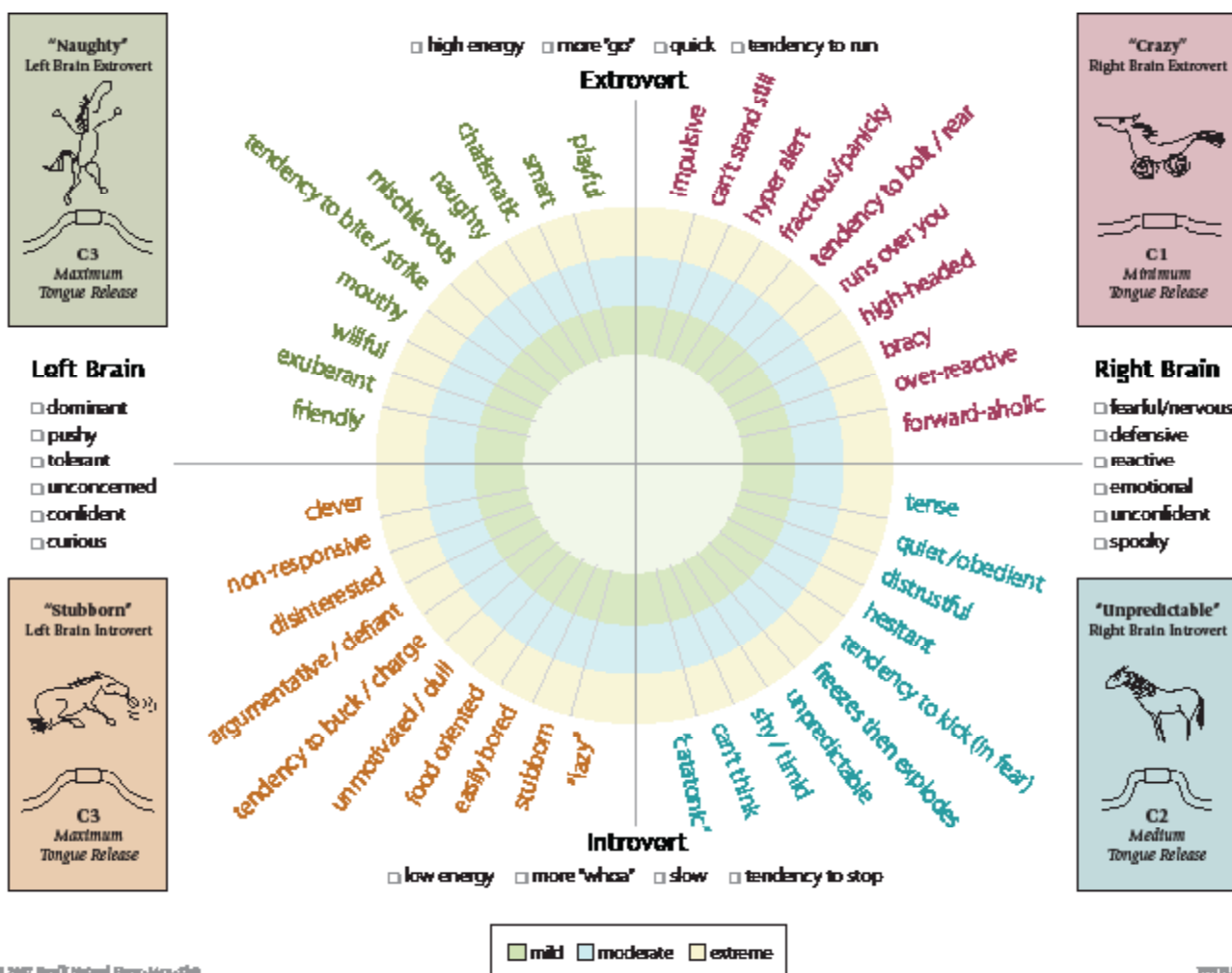


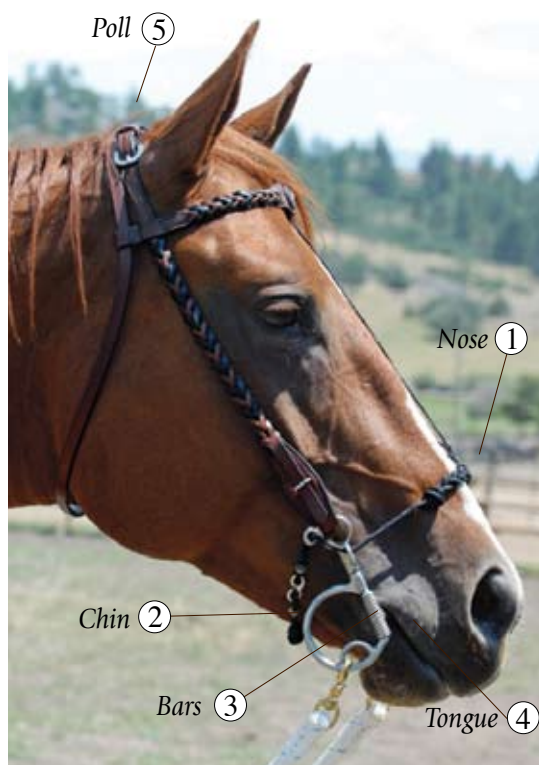
with contact, this bridle combines the Natural Hackamore with a bit mouthpiece that is far better for riding with contact than a jointed snaffle. The noseband is threaded through the bit so the horse feels the contact in five areas: the nose, chin, bars, tongue and the poll (see photo diagram). That's

why we call it the Cradle, because it cradles the horse's head in your hands, sharing the points of contact rather than all the contact being felt in his mouth.

The bit component has three different styles of mouthpiece. Each is chosen according to the individual horse's preference for varying amounts of tongue contact or tongue relief based on their Parelli Horsenality™ Profile. Unlike a snaffle, the Cradle bit does not collapse and it features the revolutionary Myler bushing system that allows independent movement of each side. The Cradle is softer in the horses mouth than any other bit.

Horses feel so different in the Cradle that they become more relaxed, more responsive and more connected in your hand, because they have no cause to be afraid of the contact; instead they feel for it as you pick up the reins. The





The New Cradle Bridle

- Cradles your horse's head in your hands
- Promotes confidence and comfort
- Communicates more kindly and accurately
- Promotes "Power steering," yet is more gentle than any other bit
- Distributes communication in five places vs. 100% pressure in the mouth
- Offers three different mouthpieces to cater to specific Horsenality™ needs – see Bridle Wisdom chart to the left

Cradle allows you to begin shaping your horse and moving towards vertical flexion by offering two positions in which to attach your reins: to the big ring first for encouraging a longer frame (and for when you still need to use one rein for control at times or in certain situations) and to the little rings for encouraging more vertical flexion.

Because horses are such individual characters with wide ranging experiences (both positive and negative), riders are encouraged to experiment with Cradle adjustments... try a snugger noseband, a looser one, or attaching reins to the big rings or to the little rings. Your horse will tell you what he prefers and for more precise directions, refer to *parelli.com*.

By making the Cradle noseband tighter, you increase the overall 'hold' of the Cradle and reduce the amount of pressure applied by the bit. This can be very comforting for horses that are very sensitive or damaged, and that are disturbed by too much movement in a bit. It also helps you take hold of a horse more quickly and effectively with one rein if he panics or plays up, yet without hurting him.

A noseband that is more loose increases the feel of the bit and is a consideration as preparation for the next stage, Collection, where the noseband has less involvement.

RINGS

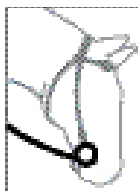
Attaching the reins to the big rings gives you more direct contact with the horse's mouth but it is still supported by the rest of the Cradle bridle so the bit cannot pull excessively

on the horse's lips either backwards or side to side; it keeps the bit comfortably centered in the horse's mouth.

Attaching the reins to the little rings offers more indirect contact with the bit and activates the noseband more. Horses who have had their confidence in bits damaged will most likely find this more comfortable, however, too much pressure or confidence may end up causing the horse to start overbending, in which case you can simply revert to the large rings or lighten up your hands! When having to use one rein for control, it is best to snap the reins on to the big rings so when the horse bends, his weight goes on the front end and the hind end can disengage. Therefore, you should use the little rings when training calmly and then switch your reins to the big rings when riding out, or in situations where you know you may need to take control suddenly.

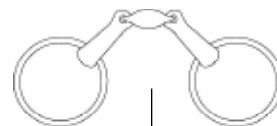
Note: We recommend using the elastic chin strap during the Contact phase as it is more forgiving. The solid strap gives a more solid feel, but a horse may surprise himself at first if he opens his mouth and may throw his head up. We recommend not using the solid strap until you progress to the Collection stage, and even then it is not essential.

5. The Confidence Snaffle: Not all horses will need this



bit before going to the next stage, only the horses who are weak muscled or do not know how to lift their backs to achieve longitudinal flexion. Horses need to learn how to lift their backs on a long, fluid rein before they

can collect or they will tend to hollow their backs. The Confidence Snaffle has a thick mouthpiece with two links in it. The bit lies over the horse's tongue and bars and when used with the Fluid Rein technique, it encourages the horse to push into it and in so doing, lift his back and lengthen his stride. There is no danger of the horse leaning on the bit because the rider keeps a rhythmic, fluid motion on the reins, allowing them to flow through their hands and encouraging the horse to seek contact but maintain self carriage. Once the horse



has learned to stretch he will love doing it because it helps him to carry the rider with more strength in his back and to move with more ease and power. You can then go back to the Cradle and your horse will still want to stretch. Continuing with the Confidence Snaffle will not enhance collection and for some horses, will have too much tongue pressure leading to a busy mouth when ridden with contact. It is purely a transition bit.

COLLECTION

Parelli Level 3+: Riding with FINESSE, COLLECTION and ENGAGEMENT

Collection is more than a horse with an arched neck. It is a mental, emotional and physical state achieved when the horse is calm, attentive and ready to perform any maneuver at any moment. In order to do this, the weight must be carried by the haunches so his center of balance is further back. This gives the horse more spring and power and balances the energy of forward, backward, right, left, up and down, producing a degree of lightness and harmony that is exquisite. As the level of collection increases, the horse becomes more 'engaged', lighter on his feet and able to offer higher levels of power.

In the Parelli Program we do not believe in forcing horses into a collected frame, we bring the horse there, through carefully thought out exercises involving frequent transitions between gaits, within the gait, and by flexing different zones of the horse while in motion. Short reins and steady contact are vital and "lightness" is achieved through harmony and responsiveness, the rider 'holding hands' with the horse via reins.

6. Parelli/Myler Cradle Bridle with leather curb strap



attached and Finesse Reins fitted to the small rings to invite elevation of the forehand and engagement of the hindquarters: Attaching a leather curb adds another dimension to the Cradle, specifically to encourage the horse to lift both his withers and poll and travel with more elevation. The Cradle encourages

the horse to lift his withers and bring his hindquarters more underneath him, something that is not easily or logically communicated to the horse with the snaffle. It is important to note that this occurs mainly through the careful and patient development of the horse through every stage and adding the appropriate tools at the right time and not by just putting a curb bit on the horse and expecting him to 'collect' right away. Collection is mental, emotional and physical; trying to do it just

through the bit can make a horse scared, confused and tense. When you study the Parelli approach to Natural Collection you will constantly be reminded that relaxation is the first key and without it, your horse is not mentally and emotionally collected and does not feel safe and in harmony with the rider.

The Cradle is ideal for training in Western performance (from reining to cutting) or English disciplines (dressage to jumping) and is the most non-critical way to introduce a horse to Collection and Engagement. It is also the ideal bridge to the English Double Bridle or Western Curb; the choice being made according to your performance focus. Jump riders should go more to the Contact settings for the Cradle, attaching the reins to the big rings for better turning at speed. Keep in mind that the Cradle may not be 'legal' at some competitions, however, using it in training will improve a horse's confidence and responsiveness to the bit used on competition day.

NOTE: The solid chin strap may be used instead of the elastic strap to encourage focus, discipline and a more 'solid' feel. It teaches the horse to respond more directly to the feel of the reins by discouraging the horse from opening his mouth and moving his jaw with the pressure, but not all of Zone 1. Adjust the noseband no tighter than ½ inch lift off the bridge of the nose.

It is important to note that Parelli does not advocate the use of tight nosebands or even the Cradle noseband to stop horses from opening their mouths when riders are too rough with their hands, use too much pressure, or are using a bit that is not comfortable for the horse. By the time you graduate to this level of the Parelli Program you will already have achieved a wonderful level of harmony and responsiveness and that is a major key.

7a. Parelli/Myler Western Curb: The western curb bit is

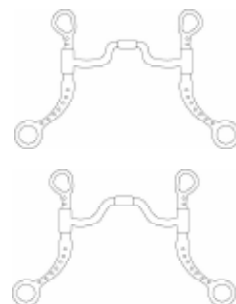


designed for riding the finished horse with one hand, on short reins that have a little 'float' in them.

This means that the horse maintains a collected frame without steady contact.

When the horse starts to come out of the frame, the rider simply corrects the horse's position by lifting one or both reins and then gives back a little slack. In Western performance sports, the horse has responsibilities and is expected to stay connected to the rider without being micromanaged through the reins, unlike English performance, where precision is crucial.

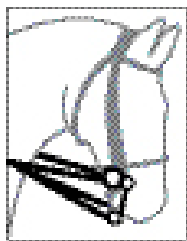
The Western performance horse



maintains its collection and engagement by being ready to go from a gallop, to a back up (slide stop), to a roll back or spin; or in the case of cutting is ready to jump from side to side, sweep away and back with its weight almost entirely on its haunches.

The Western Curb is ideal for any Western sport or job requiring the rider to ride with one hand: Reining, Roping, Cow Working, Cutting, Western Performance, etc. The Parelli/Myler Western Curb is a revolutionary bit featuring the patented Myler bushing system, which allows the rider to use the reins independently when needed to ask for more flexion or to lift a shoulder. This is because the bushing allows one side of the bit to be activated without disturbing the other side of the horse's mouth and giving conflicting or contradictory messages.

There is a wide range of shank bits available, however, Pat Parelli recommends this C-shaped, short shank curb bit for riders and horses at this stage of the Parelli Program. It is available in two different mouthpieces offering either total tongue relief or some tongue contact. Select the ideal mouthpiece for your horse according to his Horsenality Profile.



7b. English Double Bridle: Also known as a "Bit & Bradoon" the Double Bridle is made up of two bits, a curb bit (bit) and a small-ringed snaffle (bradoon). This allows the dressage-oriented rider to use slightly more snaffle or more curb, according to the requirements of training higher level maneuvers. While it seems like a lot to put into the horse's mouth, when the horse is ready for this stage of training, the bits are well accepted and make a lot of sense to the horse. The longer the shanks of a curb bit, the more elevating it feels to the horse which is why the Western Curb and English Double Bridle are the most advanced bits to use on a horse. Both horse and rider need to be well prepared.

The Double Bridles that are 'legalized' for competition use are not comfortable for all horses because they do not provide the degree of tongue relief that some Horsenalities require, especially the snaffle / bradoon part of it, and the curb bit does not have independent cheeks, so using one rein at a time can cause the opposite side of the bit to press downwards into the horse's mouth. At this point in time, Parelli/Myler Double Bridle bits can be ordered directly from Myler as a handmade bit featuring the bushing system in the curb bit, Comfort Snaffle™ bradoon, with the exact style of tongue relief or contact your Horsenality needs. Please note that while you can train in the Myler Double Bridle, it is not yet legal for competition.

Note: In the wrong hands or with a cruel attitude, leveraged bits can apply a lot of pressure because they have as much as a 10:1 pressure ratio as compared to a 1:1 from a non-leveraged bit like a snaffle or natural hackamore. In the Parelli Program students are taught how to use bits to enhance communication and subtlety rather than for more force or control.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In partnering with Myler to design and build bits ideally suited to the Parelli Program, we are now able to help horses and riders achieve even better results, with the horse's confidence, comfort, relaxation and understanding foremost in mind.

THE CRADLE STORY

Have you ever wondered why horses have trouble with bits? Sometimes the rider's hands are too quick, too rough, don't have enough feel, but sometimes even the best riders can't stop their horse from opening his mouth, coming above or behind the bit or pulling his tongue back when the bit makes contact.

Before going any further, one thing needs to be really, really clear... even the best bit is no substitute for savvy. Bits don't train horses, people do. With that said, choosing the right bit can make the world of difference for your horse.

As you may know, an important guiding principle in the Parelli Program is the Six Keys of Success: Attitude, Knowledge, Tools, Techniques, Time and Imagination. That means success is dependent on using every one of these keys, and especially being conscious of where things can get out of balance. While we have fantastic tools for teaching horses on the ground, we have only had one bit—a plain, loose ring snaffle which has worked just fine for Level 1 and 2 Freestyle riding where you ride primarily with loose reins and use one rein at a time for steering or for control through lateral flexion. But when it came to having more contact in certain phases of Level 2, and then for Level 3 and up, many horses had trouble with it. Over the past three years, Pat Parelli has been researching and



experimenting with hundreds of different bits in an effort to find bits that would be a better tool for riding with Finesse and he found it. By teaming up with the undisputed experts in biting (the Mylers), Pat was able to complete the development guide he calls "Bridle Wisdom."

I'm embarrassed to say that my first impression was pretty negative, I thought it looked like a gadget and I said so.

Ron Myler accepted an invitation from Pat to spend a few days with him at our Florida Center. The idea was to have Ron understand what our Program was about, and for Pat to understand what the Myler brothers savvied about biting as he was already using some of their bits. You see, Ron is one of the three brothers (Bob, Ron and Dale Myler) who created the Myler bit program. This is what attracted Pat, the fact that they had a program and were educating people via books and DVD's, not just selling bits.

Ron stayed for two weeks and we formed an intense relationship centered around the passion of developing a bit for our program that would be good for riders and great for horses and fill a gap in the Parelli tools for riding.

Every day, Pat and Ron would disappear into their 'laboratory' and experiment with different horses of all levels. Every day Ron would tweak things and call his shop, have them make a new bit and send it post haste, overnight. What they came out with was The Cradle, a revolutionary new approach to biting that we introduced at the September 2007 Savvy Conference.

I kept hearing Pat and Ron talking excitedly at dinner, but didn't really understand what they were up to... in fact, they couldn't really explain it to me, so Pat said I needed to come and see it.

I'm embarrassed to say that my first impression was pretty negative, I thought it looked like a gadget and I said so. Pat rolled his eyes and said, "Well, don't make up your mind until you try it" and rode away. Before I could try it on Remmer, Ron had to make one big enough to fit him! So when it arrived, Ron was there to help out.

I COULD NOT BELIEVE HOW INCREDIBLE IT FELT ON MY HORSE

Talk about eating my words. Remmer was more relaxed through the reins, he looked for more connection, was lighter, more responsive, and I felt like I had power steering.

Then I tried it on my challenging horse, Allure, and it was the first time I felt I could control him without hurting him in the mouth. Some of you may remember that I tried to ride this big, exuberant horse in a hackamore a couple of years ago but I could not bend him in it, even in a round corral. He would lunge full force against it at any gait and go to bucking with his head straight down. The bucks were not right brain, they were pure punk and I couldn't do anything about it. So I hardly rode him, just played on the ground... which was a good thing.

Pat told me to stop being righteous in trying to use a Level 1 tool when I had an emotionally damaged horse that required Level 4 savvy, and to put a snaffle in his mouth so I could bend him at least. The only trouble was, when he would go to put in a naughty buck it took so much to match him and get him bent that he then got scared because it hurt his mouth. This has been part of the reason it's taken me so long to get anywhere with him while riding, but as soon as I got him in the Cradle, everything changed. The progress I was able to make was incredible, and within days I had made advancements that previously had taken me months. I'm still riding him in it eight months later and we love it. He feels confident, soft and respectful, and I feel like I can communicate through the reins and have him understand rather than resist.

TEST, TEST, TEST

Next came more experiments and the first people to try the Cradle outside of Pat's barn were the Faculty. They had been chomping at the bit (pardon the pun!) to try it because they'd seen the changes in Allure especially and heard me raving about the Cradle every time we met. I held my breath, not wanting things to fail and waited for the comments. Success! Everyone felt an amazing change in their horse and the same comments kept coming back... the horse was more confident, more relaxed, had better contact and power steering. And when I watched, their horses were more quiet in the mouth when they took up the contact.

Earlier this year, we asked a small group of students to try the Cradle, and we did it all without an educational seminar, just gave them the Cradles, the directions and watched to see what happened. I'm amazed they even gave them back to us! All of them were blown away by the immediate difference in their horses so we allowed them to continue using them for the rest of their course.

For a short while, I went back to the Confidence Snaffle with Remmer because he was overbending in the Cradle, but as soon as Ron was back I showed him what was going on

and he told me that I either needed to add a curb strap, or put him into the double bridle because he was ready! Sure enough, it was amazing. He took to it like a duck to water, he was that prepared. I used the double bridle for a while (the bits were specially made for Remmer by Myler) until I found that it did not work for my lessons with Walter Zettl... mainly because my fluidity and tact went out the window! So now I use the Cradle on the collection setting (small rings, curb strap) and he feels fabulous... and, when I screw up in my lesson Remmer isn't affected by it nearly as much.

Here at the Center we've all been riding in Cradles on most of the horses for almost every purpose. The only ones not in Cradles are the colts who are still in hackamores, and a few of Pat's top horses who had moved up in the Bridle Wisdom program and are now in the Parelli-Myler western curb bits, and of course Remmer, who I occasionally put into a double bridle.

WHAT, WHEN, THE SECRET OF BRIDLE WISDOM

If you follow the Bridle Wisdom chart at the beginning of this article, you will be able to identify what stage you are at with your horse and know what bridle / bit set up is going to be most appropriate.

BIT-ANALY! HOW THE RIGHT MOUTHPIECE CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE

Parelli Horsenality Profiles have taken away the need for a lot of trial and error because it identifies the needs of introverts and extroverts, right brain and left brain.

- Left brain horses need more freedom for their tongue; whereas right brain horses need more security, which is why those mouthpieces have some tongue contact.
- Extroverts need a more direct feel (big rings) for better control and correction; while introverts sometimes do better with a less direct feel (little rings) because control is not such a big issue and they tend to be more easily offended or oversensitive. When you get to the Collection stage all horses will progress to the little rings.

By filling out the Horsenality Profile you can make an educated guess as to what mouthpiece is going to work best for your horse. While many horses will stay in the mouthpiece you've selected for them, some horses' needs may change as they advance, becoming increasingly left brain for example, while others will stay in the same mouthpiece as they are innately less confident (Right Brain) and will always need more support through having some tongue contact. Be prepared to change if your horse changes from right brain to reveal an innately more left brain horse. This



Left: Pat testing his Right Brain/Extrovert mare, Vanna, in the Cradle Bridle and Finesse Reins.

Below: Remmer wearing the specially designed Cradle Headstall, the C3 mouthpiece for his Left Brain/Introvert Horsenality, plus the addition of a leather curb strap for Level 3+ collection exercises.

is particularly relevant if your horse has an abusive background or has been damaged physically or psychologically by severe bits and training methods.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you have a young horse that is going into a bit for the first time, you would be best to choose the C1 Cradle, no matter what his Horsenality. By spreading the communication over his tongue and bars you will offer him the security he needs as a youngster with this new experience, plus it's closer to a loose ring snaffle yet with the extra Cradle support so he can play and experiment with the bit. Once he is ready for more contact in Level 2 - 3 you will then select the Cradle based on his Horsenality.



DON'T BE AFRAID TO EXPERIMENT!

Just like with our saddles, we rely on our horse's opinion of the tools we use to know if we're getting it right. Your horse will let you know what feels good and what doesn't so it's important to read his responses. Things like opening his mouth, excessive mouthing of the bit, overbending, inverting (going above the bit), head tossing, pulling his tongue back, sticking his tongue out, bracing, etc. etc. These are all signs that something is not right.

Certainly having the right bit with the right amount of tongue relief immediately offers more comfort to your horse, but sometimes you can have exactly the right bit in your

Troubleshooting

While many of the displaced behaviors observed in the horse's mouth are about having the wrong bit, we cannot discount the fact that horses will have trouble with riders whose hands are too rough, quick or unsteady. In the Parelli Program, we help develop horses and riders on loose reins so as to avoid damaging the horse's mouth during the learning stages. When both are developed enough to begin riding with contact, on a Concentrated Rein and with Collection, the Cradle will truly enhance the experience and maintain or even increase the horse's confidence and responsiveness.

Using the Cradle will help overcome many of the following issues, but if some of them still occur when in the Cradle, the following tips will also help you get to the root of what is happening. And if you have something that is not solved by this, please let us know so we can help!

Opening the mouth

You may either have too strong a hold on the reins, or not enough tongue relief in the bit... or both. If you are trying to collect your horse by tighter and shorter reins this may cause him to open his mouth, no matter how good the bit is because it's just too much pressure. Collection comes from making a lot of transitions so your horse is mentally, emotionally and physically ready to go forwards, backwards, right, left, up and down. This is where true collection comes from and the Cradle helps make it more comfortable and achievable without stress while preserving a consistent, gentle feel on the reins.

Tongue over the bit

Not enough tongue relief, too much pressure on the reins.

Tongue behind the bit or out the side of the mouth

Not enough tongue relief, or too much pressure on the reins.

Over-bending, coming behind the bit

Too much bar pressure in the mouth, may need curb strap to help elevate the front end, or curb strap is too loose. This is also a tendency in horses that are not very forward moving.

Inverting or coming above the bit

Too little tongue pressure, pulling on the reins, holding back an impulsive horse with two reins.

Bit pulling the mouth too much

Cradle noseband is too loose, and / or too much pressure on the reins.

Busy mouth, froth or foam – Horse is tense, nervous, overexcited and feels constricted by the contact. Need to play on ground or ride on loose reins until horse is calm... do not hold back. Check that appropriate mouthpiece has been selected for Horsenality.

Heavy on the reins during Collection

Reins need to be on the small rings, may also need a curb strap, and you need to do more transitions to balance forwards and backwards.

Head Tossing

Reins too tight, too much restriction, horse feels claustrophobic. Develop horse's mental and emotional fitness, as well as his confidence by following the program and staying on a Casual rein for longer, either in the Hackamore or Cradle. Do not attempt collection and contact until the horse is more calm, confident and trusting.

Braciness

A lot of horses get bracy or pull against the reins because the rider's hands are too quick and don't release quickly enough. It may also be a crookedness in the horse's body (ribs, uneven shoulders, etc.), a misalignment in his teeth, crookedness in the rider, etc. which leads to difficulty being straight in the bridle. The problem usually needs to be addressed in those areas and may not be at all about the bit.

The Cradle Bit is too low if

it is not snuggled firmly into the corners of the mouth. The Cradle mouthpiece is to be fitted more like a curb bit than a loose ring snaffle.

The Cradle Bit is too large if

when you pull it to one side more than ½ inch is easily visible.

The Cradle Bit is too small if

it compresses the horse's mouth and his lips pull up the sides.

The Noseband is too tight if

you cannot lift the front of it and easily get ½ inch clearance between it and the bridge of the horse's nose.

The Noseband is too loose if

the bit can move too much before the horse feels supported by the noseband or if you see that the mouth / lips move too much when activating the bit. The more bit action you want, the looser the noseband and the less Cradle action you get.

horse's mouth and you don't realize that you are too quick or too heavy with your hands, and sometimes your horse may be feeling tense and nervous about a situation and it's nothing to do with the bit and everything to do with the situation.

ADDENDUM

ELASTIC VS SOLID CHIN STRAP

Some riders may wish to move on to the solid chin strap as they seek higher levels of collection. It gives a more solid feel and more direct 'correction' should the horse try to avoid responding to the rider's feel on the reins. It is especially useful for horses who are rude and disrespectful because it 'disciplines' Zone 1, the key zone for Left Brain, dominant horses. In extreme behavioral cases you may want to apply the solid chin strap earlier in the horse's training (contact phase) and you should do so under the guidance of a Parelli Professional and in a round corral where the horse can be moved around without restraint to become

accustomed to the feel. This is because at first the horse may show concern when he feels the noseband restrict him and throw his head around or even run backwards. One needs to remain calm and allow the horse to do it, as after several repetitions he will stop, having realized what happens before what happens, happens. Should he 'forget' and do it when you are riding, simply press down on the base of your horse's neck and it will quickly calm him.

The solid chin strap should be fitted loosely at first (say one inch of space from the bridge of the nose) and gradually adjusted over a few days to half an inch of space. It is best used only by Level 3 students and above. Be sure to loosen the noseband before allowing the horse to graze or take a treat.

IMPORTANT NOTE: *The solid chin strap is not intended to stop horses opening their mouths due to rude or rough handling by riders. In this sense we prefer to allow horses to express their discomfort by opening their mouths and giving riders very clear feedback as to what is inappropriate pressure.* 🐾

Feedback from Students who are Using the Cradle Bridle...

"Had my second ride in the cradle last night. So amazing... still getting used to how much more it talks to my horse (or how my body position can talk to my horse through it). My horse's canter has changed completely..."

"I tried my bridle on my horse today and this is the first time she didn't 'play' with the bit. She loved it!"

"Had the best ride ever with my horse last night... our fourth ride in the cradle. The angst is gone. Like sometimes she would get impulsive at the trot after getting over engaged at the canter and now... not. I stop, she stops. I walk she walks... forward. There is so much less miscommunication. The relaxation is just amazing."

"After cruising around on the big rings with the elastic noseband pretty tight, I just moved to the small rings and kept the noseband the same. This was the best effect I've had so far. She was happy to push a little into the contact and yet I still had lift! I can still hold hands! Very, very exciting."

"I have been riding my Thoroughbred in the snaffle... he was all over the place, putting his head on the side, over bending his neck, avoiding the outside rein... Then I got the Cradle... He was so quiet in front, I could frame him so much better in the canter and he started to put his butt under him more and come up in front!!!! I am so excited about those bits!!!"

"Because the first two days with the cradle was so successful I wanted to see how she would accept the reins when they were attached to the small ring on the cradle. Interestingly, with the reins in the small rings I felt she not only go into vertical flexion with only ounces of rein pressure but also I felt her round her body and engage her hindquarters like I had not felt before. My actual thoughts were, 'Shazam! I've not felt this before and I love how she feels!' Her 'haunches in' and 'shoulders in' and trot 1/2 pass and canter 1/2 pass, with flying changes was the best she has ever done. I could not have been more pleased. We finished our ride on a casual rein with my heart full of gratitude."

"I've never enjoyed so much SITTING TROT on her, WOW! All my corrections would cause resistance. Today, for the first time EVER I was able to just slightly move my inside hand laterally placing the rope against her neck, she softly put a bend in her neck and glided her body back on the rail following my feel, I was shocked this was at the trot. When cantering I got the same opportunity. The adjustment was so slight with her response just as soft. My other main observation is that she's not so impulsive. I had to play point to point today before we could do any cantering. This was all very new to me. Point to point has always been leap to leap."

"Day one with the new Cradle, I let my horse carry the bit and rode Freestyle. Day two I started to Play with the bridle by picking up and releasing the reins in both the big and little rings of the bit. Day three I was blown away at my horse rising under me like a hover craft, he was "with me." I love that there are the two rein/ring settings for the reins. I have the freedom to change the contact and my horse absolutely loves it."



Doris and Jack Parelli at the Parelli Center in Ocala, FL.

Pat's Parents

Jack & Doris

WHEN PAT WAS A LITTLE GUY, WHAT THOUGHTS DID YOU HAVE ABOUT WHAT HE MIGHT GROW UP TO BE, OR DO FOR A LIVING?

MOM: I never thought about it, but he always loved animals and was curious about everything. I thought he might be a good salesman because he loved talking to and interacting with people.

DAD: It was very obvious he was not going to be a rocket scientist or a brain surgeon. He always had the gift of gab. I figured he would be a salesman or a Politician.

WHEN DID YOU FIRST NOTICE PAT'S INTEREST IN HORSES?

MOM: His Dad bought a colt from a friend when Pat was only five or six. Jack kept it in a pasture where he worked. Then, that summer, he rode a horse in a local parade.

DAD: As a little kid, approximately six-years-old, he drove me crazy wanting a horse.

WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO BUY PAT A HORSE? WERE YOU WORRIED? WERE YOU EXCITED? HOW DID YOU CHOOSE THE HORSE?

MOM: Pat rode his bike to a Shetland Pony Farm every day one summer. Then he bugged us constantly to buy him a horse, so we decided to get one for his birthday that year. I was excited for him.

His father had a friend who helped him pick one out that was safe for a beginner. I don't remember being worried, only that he might lose interest as he grew up and what would we do with a horse? I was very happy for him because he loved it so much.

DAD: Pat kept badgering me day in and day out that he wanted a horse. I finally realized if I wanted to get some sleep and get the kid off my back, I would get him a horse. I was not worried at all, because when I was a kid I would take on challenges, so I never gave it too much thought. I was excited because I finally got the kid off my back. The very first horse that Pat had, I didn't choose for him. A dear friend of mine owned a slaughterhouse in Newark, California and I asked him if I could buy one for my son. He said he wouldn't sell one to me, but he would give me a horse of my choice. I took Pat to the slaughterhouse and he picked out a paint pony (yearling). We took it home and put it in the back yard. Neither Pat nor I had any experience in breaking a horse, so that did not work out. Another dear friend of mine who was an auctioneer and would auction off livestock every Thursday night, said he would find me a horse that was gentle and safe for a young kid to ride. The horse's name

was Kelly and we paid the extremely high price of \$300 for her. She was a good gentle horse, exactly what the Doctor ordered.

WHERE DID YOU KEEP THE HORSE?

MOM: We lived in the suburbs so we kept the horse at a little country farm that boarded horses in their pasture. I drove Pat over there every day after school to play and care for his horse. Then, I would pick him up every night at dark.

DAD: We kept Kelly at a local farm, five miles away.

HAVE YOU EVER RIDDEN A HORSE? WHAT WAS IT LIKE?

MOM: As a young girl about five or six, I would pretend I was a horse. I used a rope for reins and would pull my little sister Donna around in a wagon. Then about age 12 someone gave my parents a horse that was nearly blind and very old. I rode it bareback everywhere. They took it away from me when a neighbor told my parents I was riding the horse over cattle guards. I rode a few times as an adult with my sister, Donna, who had horses.

DAD: Kelly was the first horse I ever rode. We finally realized after a few months that Kelly was in foal and she became too slow for Pat. However, she was just right for me. Kelly was a very gentle horse, I would kick her to go, pull the reins back for whoa... it was fun.

NOT BEING "HORSE PEOPLE" WHAT'S IT LIKE FOR YOU TO RECEIVE YOUR MONTHLY SAVVY CLUB PIECES?

MOM: I look forward to the Savvy Club magazine. It helps me to keep track of where Pat and Linda are and what they are doing. We always enjoy the videos. I read all the Savvy Club emails.

DAD: The magazine is very informative, a pleasure to read, pictures included. I can keep track of my kid (Ha Ha).

WHAT'S IT LIKE HAVING A SON WHO IS A FAMOUS HORSEMAN?

MOM: It is very exciting. Going to England with him to give a private demonstration for the Queen was something I'll never forget. It is very gratifying when people tell us how his methods have changed their lives. I am very proud of what he and Linda have done for horses.

DAD: If you breed a mare that is fast with a stud that is fast, there is a very good chance that the foal would be fast. With me being the father and Doris being Pat's mother, the kid couldn't miss. I expected him to be what he is today. I expect him to succeed, and of course, I am very proud of his success. 🐾

At left, Pat with his parents at the Parelli Center in Pagosa Springs, CO. Pictured at right: Pat, 13 years old, with Kelly and her foal Thunder.



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Brilliance in Joins Prior and Proper Preparation

by Kalley Krickeberg

Recently, two of the horse industry leaders have come together to influence the horse world in a positive way. Atwood Ranch, owned by Dr. Tom Atwood, has integrated the Parelli Preschool Program™ into what is one of the top Quarter Horse breeding programs in the country. Tom Atwood has the wisdom and mastery of decades of breeding the finest performance Quarter Horses. Combine that with the wisdom and mastery of Parelli Natural Horsemanship, a program like no other... I feel honored to be a part of what is yet to come.

The journey of bringing Parelli Natural Horsemanship to Atwood Ranches began some time ago in the hearts and minds of Mike and Catherine Sapienza. The Sapienzas have been Parelli students and fans for the past 10 years and they have been Atwood Ranch managers for the past nine years. Atwood Ranch has been one of the premier breeding facilities for top performance Quarter Horses for over 30 years. These horses have achieved high honors in various arenas, most prominently in the cutting, reining and cow horse events,



Breeding

but Tom Atwood is primarily interested in breeding sound, versatile horses that people want to purchase and go on in whatever discipline suits them and the horse.

The Sapienzas saw the value of bringing these two programs together. Tom Atwood has known the value of early education in livestock and Pat has instilled the importance of it to be done and done correctly for a very long time, so it only seemed natural for this to come to fruition. That is where I come in. I had just returned to the USA from the trip to Australia with "River." I was at the airport checking my phone messages and there was one from Atwood Ranches. Long story short, I talked to Pat about various details and 10 days later I



Kalley Krickeberg with Linda and Pat Parelli, Catherine and Mike Sapienza, and Tom Atwood (middle) from Atwood Ranches.

was packing my bags in Florida and headed BACK to California to a town called Elk Grove, just south of Sacramento. Once there, I was to start and head the Parelli Preschool Program™ with the Atwood yearlings in a division of the Atwood Ranches called Atwood Ranch Naturally.

The first day on the job was approximately 3 days after I arrived. It was branding time for all the Atwood yearlings and Mr. Atwood asked that "all hands be on deck" as they say, to observe and be a part of the process. This was my first introduction to my future "students." They all were fairly wild and scared. A lot had happened between their pasture they called home and the pens they were in at the time, and they were pretty bothered. It became clear it was my job to catch and halter the colts for this project. I knew this was my first test, I had already felt a bit of skepticism amongst the group, but I was not worried. I had a choice to make at that moment and I chose to seize the opportunity. They say you only have one chance to make a first impression, and this was it. This was my first and most important chance to make a good solid impression not only for myself and my Parelli skills and abilities, but also (most importantly) my first chance to make an impression for the company and people I represent at Parelli. Everyone, including owner Tom Atwood, John Wells the Atwood Cattle Ranch Manager, Jack and Jody Elliot the Atwood Breeding facility Manager, and Mike and Catherine Sapienza observed as I went about my business and did my job as I have been trained to do through my years at Parelli. A few hours and no dust later, the task had been accomplished, goals had been achieved and best of all the principles had been maintained. I knew if I could impress the horses, I would have a chance to impress the people as a by-product. It was a good day for the horses and for Parelli. There were nods of approval all around and in ranch country that means a lot. It would be two weeks later when the yearlings would begin their education in Parelli Preschool. I look forward to sharing the progress as we all go... and so the Journey begins. 🐾

**A perfect
gift for the
holidays!**

*May your holiday season be filled with joy and peace.
As we reflect on the passing year welcoming another, may we remember
just how thankful our horses are for the experience of Parelli.*



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Savvy Club Update

BIG NEWS FOR SAVVY CLUB DVDS STARTING JANUARY 2008!

Get ready for an exciting new schedule of DVD content starting with your January Members' DVD. We've been listening to your requests for exclusive sessions with Pat and Linda and are busy taping new segments to cover Level 1-2 problem solving and Level 3-4 advanced teaching subjects in every DVD!



FREE ADMISSION TO TOUR EVENTS

Please reserve your Free Savvy Club seats for Tour Events by requesting a ticket for yourself and anyone who is attending on your membership. Doing this will help us make sure that everyone gets a seat!

To request your free tickets login to the Savvy Club web site (www.parellisavvyclub.com), click on the link for tickets (found in the lower left hand corner of the featured photo on the Club home page) and fill out the online form. Please note you can only request as many member tickets as the number of people on your membership. In addition to your member tickets, you can request up to five buddy passes for friends.

SAVVY CLUB MEMBERS' JOURNAL

Use your special Savvy Club Member journal to record important dates, events and memories with your horse.

The journal includes a convenient day planner, and each page has inspiring photos and savvy wisdom from Pat and Linda. Additional journals can be purchased for \$5.95.



DON'T FORGET YOUR PASSPORT OR JOURNAL & MEMBERSHIP CARD

Requesting tickets will get you in free to all the Parelli USA Tour stops, but don't forget your Parelli Passport/Journal and membership card. Your passport/journal



can be stamped at the Savvy Club booth with a unique stamp at every Tour stop or major Parelli event to document your journey! Your card will be swiped to add your 25% discount to your purchases at the show. Lost your card? Be sure to have a record of your member number.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

This is your Club and we want you to contribute! We want to know how Parelli has changed your horse-human-relationship. Do you have stories or photos you would like to share? Send them in!

Mail can be sent to: Parelli Natural Horsemanship, Attn: Savvy Times, PO Box 3729, Pagosa Springs, CO 81147, or you can e-mail savvyclub@parelli.com.



STAY IN TOUCH WITH PARELLI E-NEWS

Parelli e-News is our official weekly newsletter. Find out about special offers; get Tour updates, TV programming news, new releases, tips and more.

Call 1-800-642-3335 (US) or 1800 460 988 (AU) or 0800 023 4813 (UK) to update your e-mail information with us or you can do it yourself in the new Club site at www.parellisavvyclub.com

to have e-News conveniently delivered to your Inbox. Some e-mail programs do have spam blockers that prevent delivery. Don't worry! You can view e-News each week from the link on the www.parelli.com home page.

MEMBERS RECEIVE 25% OFF!

Members receive 25% off all Parelli education and equipment! This offer applies whether you order on the web, call us by phone or make a purchase at an event. (Note: Parelli Center Course Discount is 35% Off!). When completing an order in the Parelli web shop, make sure that the system has recognized you as a Savvy Club Member. When you are properly recognized, the upper right hand corner will say, "Welcome (your user name). You are a Savvy Club Member."

The login page explains the steps you need to take to make sure you are recognized. If you have followed all of the steps and still have problems, please e-mail savvyclub@parelli.com or call 1-800-642-3335 (US) or 1800 460 988 (AU) or 0800 023 4813 (UK).

PARELLI AT EXPOS '08

Parelli will be attending seven horse expos in 2008 across the United States. There will be an information booth set up at each expo and at a few of the expos, Parelli Instructors will be doing demonstrations.

2008 Expo Schedule

Jan 11-13 Augusta, ME
NE Horseman's Conference

Feb 13-17 Jackson, MS
Dixie Nationals-Equine Expo

Feb 21-24 Harrisburg, PA
Horse World Expo (Demo)

Feb 29-Mar 2 Wichita, KS
Equifest of Kansas

Mar 14-16 Denver, CO
Rocky Mountain Horse

Mar 28-30 Albany, OR
NW Horse Fair & Expo

Apr 18-20 Madison, WI
Midwest Horse Fair & Expo (Demo)

Life in... Australia

The Bannister Family

Their Journey with Parelli, Crocs, and the Irwin's

by Lyle Congdon

At the Parelli International Conference in Australia earlier this year, we were fortunate enough to have some very special guests join Pat and Linda for an amazing two days of horsemanship and inspiration. Among these people were Simon, Julie, Ben and Tom Bannister. You might not have heard their names before but I am sure you are familiar with who they work for: Terri Irwin and the conservation that is helping to carry-on "The Crocodile Hunter," Steve Irwin's legacy.

Neil Pye, Parelli Professional Program Director and Eric Weiler, official Tour camera man, were able to spend a few minutes with Simon and his family in an emotional and insightful interview about their personal journey through Parelli, where they see the Parelli program in their future, Steve's passing, and of course, crocs.

Simon admits that he has only recently gotten on a horse again but that as a family, they are all involved in the program. "It's an emotional thing that, as a male, you're supposed to be big and tough and rough and it's something that I know, that there's a mental and emotional side in horsemanship that I've got to get myself ready to go into that journey. Because it's something that I know is going to be hard and there's going to be hard days and hard hours riding, you know, and it's not just all about your horse. I have bigger goals with horsemanship. I want to take it and I want to offer it to kids. They're our future horsemen in this world. They're our future and that's [who] I want to give it to. That's

where I'm headed," which is why he has both of his sons involved with Parelli.

Julie, who is working on her Level 2, has also realized that the program is not all about the horse. "I just think it's a great thing. It just helps you in your life and so we just want to, as Pat says, be the best that we can be," Julie tells Neil. When Eric asked what is Parelli, both Julie and Simon responded with 'growing.' "Growing, values, family values, right through all types of animals," Simon told Eric.

The 84,000 acre conservation bought by the Irwin's in Western Queensland and managed by Simon and Julie, is a wildlife refuge. "We've got clear country all the way around

us, you know. We're an isle in the trees. There are a lot of reptiles there. We found some endangered reptiles there. It's a place for wildlife," says Simon.

"And nature..." replies Neil. "I think that's what harmonizes so much with the Parelli Program. Pat and Linda are trying to get people back to the natural order of things, certainly with horses, but it's like the work Terri's doing still, in Steve's legacy."

"Yah, and it will continue on, you know. Steve was the one who said we owe it to him to get back up and get back into it and move on with what he wanted and where he wanted it to go," responds Simon who is helping to carry on Steve's legacy with his conservation work. He is also helping to create a buzz about Parelli Natural Horsemanship by spreading the word about the program by practicing its prin-



Simon and his sons, Ben and Tom, with Neil Pye during the Parelli International Conference in Australia

ciples at the Australian Zoo conservation property. "We've got a Belmont Red Cattle stud out there and we use our horses out there. We've got up and coming young conservationists here and animal lovers and natural horsemen. Yah,

"And in your spare days you go and do bomb detonation or something like that?" Neil jokes.

Simon is like many of us horse lovers, "I ride horses to relax," he tells Neil.

"I had a lot of emotional times yesterday and I will today again."

we'll use both in there and we'll move ourselves forward in the system and offer it as much as we can." Simon tells Neil.

Simon was fortunate enough to work beside Steve and Terri not only at the Australian Zoo, but also in the wild, catching and researching crocodiles. "I've been lucky enough in a bit over the two years I've been working for Steve and

Terri. The first year I got asked to go on the crocodile research trip up in Cape York in Queensland and I traveled up there and was lucky enough to be in the car and travel up and spend 21 days with his father, Bob,



who... he's a mentor. And this year we went back up and we spent nearly three weeks up there with Steve and Terri and Bob catching crocodiles and we actually trap them

in traps, that Bob has developed over the years and Steve has made better, and Steve brings the crocodile out and you actually jump on the back of him."

"Intentionally?!" asks Neil.

"Yah, intentionally," Simon tells Neil. "It's a team sport. It's very professional... very, very professional. And if you've got a missing link in that team, well, you know there could be accidents, but there are never accidents and it's all about conservation."

Also, like many people in the Parelli program, they truly enjoyed the conference held in Australia. Both Simon and Julie said that "All of it" was the best part of the two days. Watching Pat and Linda really rekindled something in Simon. "I had a lot of emotional times yesterday and I will today again. They are mentors and it's hard to look at them," he openly tells Neil. Simon goes on talking, "The show was great. It was inspirational if anything. Makes



you want to get back on and get back into the program and study hard. I haven't ridden now for a number of months and I owe it to myself to get back in the saddle and start riding and start studying again and I owe it to my family, Julie and the two boys, to get them riding better. They

are already natural, but just get them a bit further along in the program."

"It's been a pleasure to meet you and your family and well done. You're good examples and you're good for Australia and good for Natural Horsemanship," Neil tells Simon and his family as they end their interview.

After the emotional interview and inspirational weekend for Simon he warmly thanks Neil for his time and only has one thing left to say... "Crocs Rule!" 🐾



JUNIOR SAVVY

Hanging Out With Your Horse

We all like to hang out with our friends, but have you ever thought about hanging out with your horse? Spending time together is how we get to know each other. Hanging out is taking time to see what your horse is like when he is just being a horse. This is a great thing to do any time of year! So whether winter is setting in or summer is just around the corner take some time to just hang out with your horse.



Just a Few Ideas For Getting To Know Your Horse

- What is your horse's favorite food?
- What grass does your horse like best?
- Does your horse eat wild flowers?
- What is your horse's favorite treat?
- Does your horse share his food?
- How often does your horse drink?
- Does your horse like being with other horses or does he like to be alone?
- Does your horse have a favorite horse buddy?
- Is that buddy a mare or gelding?
- Does your horse think you are his buddy?
- If it rains does your horse stand in the rain or run for shelter?
- When your horse rolls does he prefer grass or dirt or sand or mud?
- Does your horse roll all the way over or one side at a time?
- What does your horse do when a fly lands on him?
- How does your horse act around other types of animals?
- What does your horse do when he is afraid?

Savvy Safety

My Corral

It is always important to remember to protect your space when around horses. We each have our own invisible corral around us that our horses should not enter unless invited. Your corral can be any size you want. One way to determine the size of your invisible corral is to hold a carrot stick in one hand. Hold that arm straight out to your side and turn in a circle to see how big your corral is. This can be your very own safety corral.



Pat and his darling granddaughter Angelina.

When I put a halter on, I always like to give him a hug or a kiss or scratch, just to let him know he did it right like always.



DEX DAY NINE

SEPT 13 2007

On the way to the playground I learned to not push Dex through a threshold. If he got scared I would stop and wait until he felt comfortable to go on.



Sophie and Dexter met in the last issue of Savvy Times: Sophie, very new to horsemanship and Dex, a seasoned Level 3 student was owned and handed down to Sophie by Terra Pugh. Terra was Dex's teacher through Level 3 and beginning Level 4.

When around Sophie, Dexter seems to melt into a calm, doting partner. He seems to know how delicate the situation is with his 10-year-old inexperienced friend, who needs all the information and care he has to offer.

This session was their ninth together and they went on a walk with Mom, Grandma, Coco, and Dexter's pasture buddy, Escada, to play the Seven Games with obstacles in the Savvy Park at the Colorado Parelli Center.



Dex is too funny. He is constantly getting the rope stuck under his foot. I usually just lower the rope and it's out but this time I got him to do the Spanish Walk. He is so cute.





When we got to the playground my Mom and I were playing follow the leader and my Mom asked me if I could get Dex to put two feet on the beam.

Instead of two, he put all four feet!

It was fun to play around with the different obstacles because it gave me a sense of achievement and new things to do.



My Mom helped me put the halter on and showed me how to tie the knot. Dex was very patient.



obstacles

No Matter Where We Go There We Are

England



"A horse! A horse!
my kingdom for a horse!"
- William Shakespeare
from Richard III

To have "been" in England

- Coco



by Parelli Photographer, Coco



A Level 2 Journey - Part 12

FROM BAREBACK TO SADDLE: WHY DID IT FEEL SO WEIRD?

Riding Escada bareback was something that happened purely out of necessity... I didn't own a saddle. Then after a while it turned into a desire. I thought if I could learn to ride bareback well, then I should be able to ride even better in a saddle.

The March video lesson with Linda (Savvy Club DVD ISSUE 24 and Savvy Times Issue 15, May 2007) was a big turning point in my bareback riding, when Linda identified the things that were stopping me from being able to progress.

I learned how to be safe and confident riding bareback. Mastering the Balance Point was the best part—I could stick to my horse like glue. Escada could trip, she could buck, swerve, and my balance point would literally ANCHOR me to her back. It was a WONDERFUL feeling.

One day, late last year in Florida, after an hour long trail ride following Linda and Remmer (one of Escada's favorite things to do because the scenery changes and I don't ask her to do anything), Linda asked if I'd like to sit in her Fluidity saddle to feel what it was like. She's particularly thrilled with how well the saddle turned out. Being a natural skeptic, I climbed aboard expecting something good, but it was incredible. I had just been riding for over an hour bareback, and when I sat in the saddle it didn't feel any different to how I'd been sitting bareback. It was very impressive.

So about eight weeks ago I borrowed Linda's English Fluidity Saddle to begin my next stage of riding with Escada. I wanted to borrow the Fluidity Saddle because I haven't decided if I want to ride English or Western. I'd be happy to do either, I'm just not sure which to choose yet.

At first, the saddle felt just as great as when I'd sat in it on Remmer, but when Escada moved off into the trot, I was ALL OVER THE PLACE!

Thankfully Linda was there and I could say to her, "I feel like I can't ride anymore!" If she hadn't been there, I would have tried to blame the saddle, but when she watched me try to ride the trot she saw that it was something different altogether... it was not about the saddle!



Over the past two years of Savvy Times, Yvonne has shared her journey through Level 2 skills, bucking issues, Fluidity lessons and the Horse Behavior trailer loading marathon that totally transformed a four-year relationship with her Arabian Mare, Escada.

This issue we hear about how lessons in "Transitions" and "Riding In" are taking their riding sessions to new levels.

TRANSITIONS, TRANSITIONS, TRANSITIONS... WHY DO I KEEP FORGETTING?!

As Linda watched me bounce around in the saddle as if I hadn't ridden a day in my life, she noticed I wasn't having a saddle or fluidity problem, I was having an obedience/impulsion problem.

Escada wasn't too pleased about being asked to trot around the arena. Her disobedient brain and piggy attitude was causing her to dump her weight forward as she moved; and she resisted everything I wanted to do, so she was jerky and bouncy. It felt like total disharmony. No amount of fluidity could have made that trot easy to ride.

So Linda said the best solution was to get her interested and bring up my leadership and therefore her obedience by asking for transitions every 12 feet. Trot for 12 feet, walk for 12 feet, trot for 12 feet, walk for 12 feet, etc.

If you've been reading my articles, you'll know that this is not the first time Linda has given me this lesson! Why on earth do I keep forgetting about the value of transitions?

The only excuse I can think of is that in my whole riding life as a child and teenager my focus was trail riding. Start at A, ride to B (which was anything from half a mile to 3 or 4), then return back to A, the whole time trying to stop my pony from bolting home!

Transitions and riding were not two things that went together in my world, but now my quest to be a good rider/leader totally depends on it!

After apologizing to Linda for forgetting about transitions again, and tapping myself on the head to see if that might help the information stick there... I started trotting for 12 feet, then walking for 12 feet.. Within two laps of the arena, magically I could ride Escada's trot. After about the fourth lap, she started blowing and relaxing, so I quit and let her rest for a bit, then started again.

This time Linda had me add turns through the center of the arena and then do some small circles around a cone in the center of the arena. By the end of the 20 minute session I said to Linda, "I think this is the best ride I've ever had on this horse!" She felt obedient, she felt interested, she wasn't bucking defiantly and she wasn't dumping her weight on the forehand. I was happy! AND I VOWED to never have to be told about transitions AGAIN!!

LEARNING TO "RIDE IN..." AND A TASTE OF LEADERSHIP

As the September Savvy Conference was approaching and the new Success Series DVDs were being digested and enjoyed by students all over the world, the question arose regarding one of the DVDs titled "Ride Out." What about a new DVD called "Ride In?" The Ride Out DVD in the Success Series covers preparation for riding outside arenas—in open spaces, on trails, etc. Ride In would cover any success tips Pat and Linda had on how to successfully ride INSIDE an arena.

Since my horse is a Left Brain/Introvert that thinks arenas are boring, I was particularly interested in what those tips might be. So I asked Linda if she'd let me be one of her Ride In guinea pigs. She said "Yes!"

On guinea pig day, she first explained that riding inside an arena "does not have to be boring for me or my horse, and that it was not a license to become brain-dead as a leader..."

I could relate to that last comment, that's probably why she mentioned it. I'd never really thought of an arena as much more than four straight lines and one big rectangle. She pointed to the spaced out, low kick-board rails that defined her arena and asked

me to think about what I could do with them other than stay inside them. I could use those to weave in and out of, walk over, trot over, straddle, go sideways over, do transitions in between, back between, back around... etc.

She also added four cones in the shape of a square, about ten feet apart, in the middle of the arena. She said I could do circles around each cone, figure-eight's around and between all four cones, stop in the center of the cones, and also back circles and figure-eight's around them.

All of a sudden I couldn't wait to get started.

Armed with a bunch of ideas on how to be brain-alive not brain-dead in an arena, I rode in...

I did all the things she said. Escada and I weaved, we transitioned, we straddled, we backed, we circled, we figure-eighted... It was a blast! Escada felt totally with me, and she didn't have time to think disobedient thoughts because she had to think about what I was asking her to do every minute, getting around the obstacle, walking, trotting, then stopping, then backing. It was great... UNTIL...

Linda was very excited that it was working as well as it was. I think she was even surprised at how quickly I'd gone from having no ideas in an arena to having lots. So she came up with one more suggestion. She said, "Okay, now trot to the end of the arena, trot over the arena rail, trot around the outside of the arena, then as you cross the rail on the way back into the arena, ask Escada to canter."

I quickly answered, "No." Linda laughed.

In my mind, asking Escada into a canter while trotting over the rail was giving her a license to buck. Even though I knew I could ride it, I didn't feel like doing it because... well, just because!

Linda assured me I'd be fine, she'd seen me survive many a defiant buck and I've always been able to trust Linda's advice in the past, so I took a deep breath and tried it... I trotted over the rail marking the end of the

arena, went around the outside and as I came over the rail back into the arena I asked for the canter and... massive PIGGY buck!

I looked at Linda and she had fallen off her chair laughing. I was laughing too because it wasn't just a buck, it was a buck-twist-one-legged-kick to the side with a side order of attitude to boot.

"I knew that would happen," I said to Linda.

"You know she bucked because you forgot to be a leader," Linda said. "You stopped looking where you were going and waited for the problem!"

She was right of course. And boy did the light bulb go on for me that day. My horse is a natural leader (innately Left Brain) and I'm a natural follower (innately Right Brain). Escada can divert my focus so easily and I don't even know she's doing it!

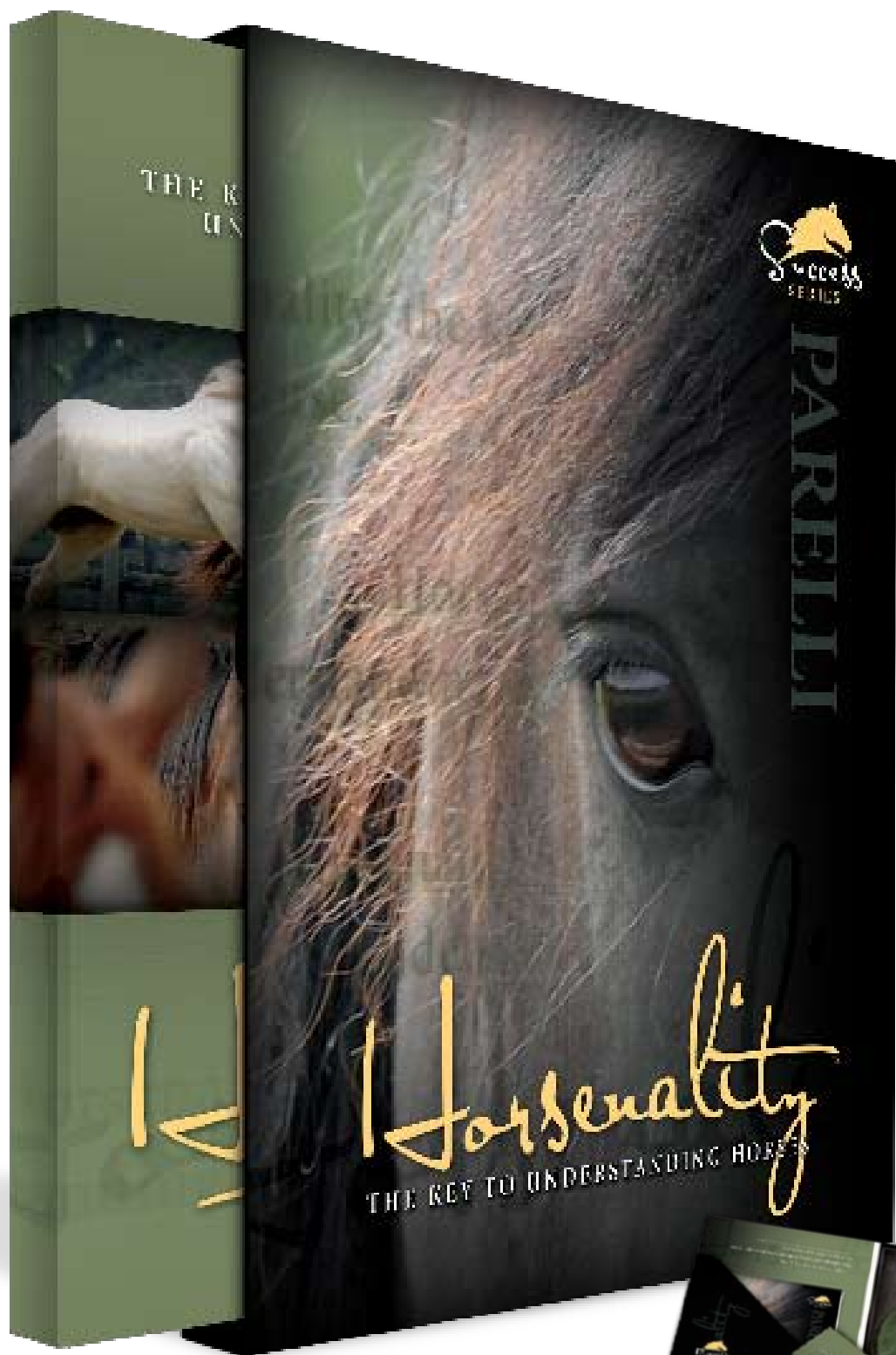
So I tried it again. This time ready to keep my focus firmly on where I wanted to go next, and not on the buck.

We repeated the same exercise and as I came over the rail into the arena, I asked Escada to canter. I kept my focus on the other side of the arena, firmly focused on where I wanted to go. Escada thought about bucking but with my intention locked on my destination on the other side of the arena and my next transition, she forgot about bucking. What a triumph!

That lesson, along with the last lesson on transitions, is one that I really hope I don't forget. Just kidding—I WON'T FORGET. In the space of five minutes I was able to prove to my horse that I had a plan. I'm able to do that easily on the ground through time and experience, but had not truly found how to do that on her back until that day.

As I said in the last Savvy Times issue "my focus now is to become a good rider and great leader while riding," and I learned that in order to do that, I have to do more than trail ride. So I'm really happy with our progress so far and I can't wait for more. 🐾





"The Horsenality Chart is one of the best tools I have seen from Parelli. It is so complete, so sophisticated, yet so easy to use. Now I have a way to really feel like I am starting in the right place. Please convey my thanks to Linda and Pat for once again giving us a key to unlock the gate to communication with our wonderful partners."—Maggie W.



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